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# LETTERS AND JOURNALS

Edmond and Curtis ✓

Judge William Edmond  
1755 - 1838

Judge Holbrook Curtis  
1787 - 1858

Judge William Edmond Curtis  
1823 - 1880

William Edmond Curtis and Dr. Holbrook Curtis  
1855 - 1923                      1856 - 1920

Elizabeth Curtis







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## Introduction

E collecting these old letters, newspaper clippings and fragments of family **16205669** first idea was to make a sort of scrap book. The diversity of material, however, seemed to need welding together in more interesting form, so that I have tried to present a picture of life in old Connecticut.

Following the trails which lead back into "the forest primeval," we reach the **COPYRIGHTED 1926** of Hartford on the Connecticut River. **ELIZABETH CURTIS**  
**NEW YORK, N. Y.**

The men who founded it broke away from Massachusetts to avoid the incorporation of Church with State. This fact and also the superior birth and education of the pioneers may account for a more liberal atmosphere than is apparent farther north in the "land of the bean and the cod."

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Xerox - Jan 1972







## Introduction

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granted the franchise only with church membership) armed themselves and prepared to march upon Hartford. The prospect of civil war was happily averted by the necessity for uniting against the Indians, the Dutch and later the English Governor of New York. When, in 1686, Andrus went to Hartford to demand the surrender of their precious charter, it was saved by Samuel Wadsworth, who blew out the candles, seized the parchment as it lay upon the table, and hid it in a hollow of "Charter Oak."

Hollister's History gives an interesting picture of the early settlers. One is apt to forget that the country was literally a howling wilderness and that the problem of forcing a living from the land to men who were often untrained to labor made a successful "Planter" the most important person in a community. Until after the Revolution, education and farming fitted together, but I doubt if college athletes of today swing a bat as well as their ancestors could swing a gleaming scythe! The British feeling of caste was shown by the use of Mr., esquire, and gentleman; while the sons of governors and magistrates were often addressed as "Sir" this or that. At Yale College front seats were allotted according to social position and the Curtises and Edmonds were among the elect even as late as 1820.

In 1639, the year of the creation of the Hartford Constitution, William and John Curtis, with their widowed mother, Elizabeth, settled in Stratford. They came from Warwickshire, and a paper with their coat of arms is preserved by one of their descendants. From the original in Heralds' College, London, one sees that the names of William and John Curtis go back for many generations, while the motto, "Sapere Aude," is most appropriate for a family somewhat given to intellectual daring. "Captain William Curtis, Esquire," held various positions of trust: assistant, deputy, member of the "Great High Commission" and Captain of the forces of Fairfield County. He was also mentioned for bravery by Governor Treat and was one of a Committee delegated to select proper sites for the towns of Derby, Fairfield and Stamford.







Among our other ancestors who were fighting, law-making, and preaching at that time were: Richard Treat from Barminster, who was magistrate, assistant, deputy and a patentee of the Royal Charter. Edmund Sherman and his son, Hon. Samuel Sherman, magistrate, "assistant" progenitor of many distinguished men, and who boasted a line of royal descent. Governor Thomas Welles, whose family were supposed to come from Raynes Hall, Essex, and whose first wife's name was Mary Hunt. Richard Deming, whose daughter, Elizabeth married first Nathaniel Foote, and second the already mentioned Thomas Welles. It is always a satisfaction when we find a wife who outlived several husbands, since in those hard times the husbands usually wore out a number of wives and had a dozen children by each! Another ancestress, May Blackleach of Hartford, had three husbands, one of whom was the Samuel Wadsworth who saved the Charter, but our line is through Captain John Olcott. Dr. Jasper Gunn was practising in Hartford at this time, one of the few doctors among our fore-fathers.

There were also Richard Beach, John Birdseye, John Peacock (queer names), Richard Booth, Esquire, and "Mr. Hawley"; Elder Brewster and Reverend Henry Smith; John Hollister, who was excommunicated by Reverend Mr. Russell of Wethersfield, but whose brother-in-law, Governor Treat, espoused his cause, and eventually drove the parson out of his parish.

A picturesque character who came to Stratford at the same time as William Curtis, and from whom we are descended through two lines, was Francis Nichols, who, as he had been in the Royal Guards, trained all the militia of Fairfield County. Orcutt thinks he was an older brother of the governor of New York and through his mother descended from the Stuarts.

To be thoroughly New England, one must have a witch in the background, and ours was Mary Baines who in liberal-minded Hartford was convicted of witchcraft in 1662 and supposedly executed, since her husband remarried







[1766]

the following year. Her daughter married John Scovill, who came to this country from "Whole Place," Wessex, about 1655. There seems to have been much intercourse between the various settlements for they married wives from Hartford, New Haven, Stratford, Norwich, etc. They must have travelled by boat rather than horseback owing to savage-infested forests and boggy trails.

At the time of the Revolution my great grandfather, William Edmond, was an officer in the Continental Army, as were my great grandmother Holbrook's brothers, but my mother's grandparents, the Scovills and Davies, as well as my great grandfather, Salmon Curtis, were Episcopal Tories.

James Scovill, our great-great grandfather, who was fourth in descent from the witch's daughter, was the first Episcopal minister in Waterbury and was ordained in Westminster in 1757. After the Revolution he took three shiploads of sympathizers to Canada and founded the town of Kingston, near St. John. Here is a letter he wrote, in 1766, to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel which shows his feeling for the Church of England: and emphasizes the need for an American Bishop.

WATERBURY July 8 1766

"REV. SIR —

There never was greater need of inculcating to the best advantage the important doctrine of the Gospel as taught in the Church of England, than at this day \* \* \* Scarce any individual belonging to the Church having any share in the tumults and disorders raised by the Stamp Duty; but their quiet behavior hath subjected them to the odium of the dissenters, who are the governing part here and have the authority in their hands; and what will be the consequence of their enmity God only knows. \* \* \* I humbly conceive nothing can be done more conducive to the well-being of the Church in America, than the ap-







pointment of Bishops to reside here." \* \* \* In 1761 he writes "My parishioners are now engaged in finishing the galleries in our Church, which they have almost accomplished etc." It was in this Church that there was a painting of himself followed by his nine Children opposite one of Noah leaving the ark with his.

Rev. Thomas Davies son of John also writes from New Milford 1765\* \* \* "there is such a fermentation in the Country as though some mighty change were taking place" — he, however, died before the Revolution.

William Scovill, the grandson of Rev. James, married Ruth Davies, daughter of Judge Thomas Davies of Ogdensburg, and the sister of Judge Henry E. Davies, Professor Charles Davies, and General Thomas Davies of New York. John Davies, who came to America in 1735, bought a large tract of land near Litchfield, Connecticut, where he built houses for all of his sons, including a church for his grandson Thomas who was a clergyman. The property was confiscated during the Revolution, and the church moved to Washington, while the family fled to Canada and later crossed the border to Black Lake in northern New York.

John Davies, 2d, born in Kingston, Herefordshire, 1711, was an Oxford graduate whose wife, Elizabeth Spencer, when she first came over wrote back to friends in England that there were "nothing but rattlesnakes and Presbyterians in Connecticut." John Davies, the first, was the son of Thomas Davies of London, said to be the fourth son of Robert Davies of Gwysany Castle, near Mold, in Wales. Robert showed the family characteristic of loyalty to the established order by defending his house for King Charles against Cromwell's army. Gwysany is a beautiful Tudor structure standing in an extensive park with ruins of an older building near by. The family is descended from many interesting characters in history, the best, to my mind, being Richard Coeur de Lion. What a comfort it is, for an arrant coward, to know that a thousand years ago one was a marvel of courage! At the present time it is in possession of the Davies-Cookes, who refused to let me see







it last summer because I had no letter of introduction! Fortunately I had gone into the beautiful old hall to write them a note and so had a chance to see the portraits, the rose garden, yew trees, and the park with grazing sheep.

The third Connecticut Tory was Salmon Curtis, a friend of John Beach, the well-known Episcopal minister who was ducked in Newtown pond. Salmon Curtis had a lieutenant's commission in the King's army but never fought, although according to tradition "he was hunted like a wild beast through the woods." His courting of Esther Holbrook, my great-grandmother, was done under difficulties. She was living at Oyster Bay, where the first settler, John Holbrook, had bought land about 1648, before he settled in Derby. Salmon Curtis often crossed the Sound in his boat to see her, and one day a party of Continentals arrived to search the house. Esther saw them approaching and quick as thought took her lover into the kitchen, put him under a large wash tub, placed another on top, and was very busy washing clothes when the soldiers entered. She gave them permission to go over the house but regretted that she was unable to accompany them. As soon as they had left, Salmon started for the shore to reach his boat, when to his horror, he saw the troopers returning. This time he crawled under a culvert, and they galloped over his head, after which he succeeded in making his escape.

In one of my grandfather's letters he describes the attitude of Captain John Holbrook, Esther's father, who had no use for the Tories, and whose two sons were captains in Washington's army. Salmon Curtis' only son, Holbrook, married Elizabeth Payne Edmond, the daughter of Judge William Edmond of Newtown, who, with his father, Robert Edmond, were ardent patriots. Robert was the son of Scotch parents living in Londonderry and he came to Connecticut in 1756.\* He brought with him an extensive library for those days, many of the books still being in our possession, and, although the tenth son of a clergyman, was educated and somewhat scholarly. William Edmond graduated from Yale in 1777. He married first

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\*See appendix.







*William Edmond*













Elizabeth, daughter of General Chandler, who died about 1796, when he married Elizabeth Payne, daughter of Judge Benjamin Payne of Hartford. We have some colonial money signed by Benjamin Payne and here is a quaintly worded resolution passed by the legislature after his death:

#### HARTFORD CONNECTICUT

"Friday, 25th Jan'y 1782      P.M.

The House in procession (with his Excellency the Governor and Honorable Upper House, Secretary, etc., at their head) attend the funeral of Benjamin Payne, Esq., Representative of the Town of Hartford, who was seized of a paralytic disorder last Monday morning, whereof on Wednesday evening he expired. Whose exemplary and useful life and conversation as an individual member of the community and approved fidelity in discharge of the important duties of the various public offices he sustained in church and state, rendered him dear to his virtuous acquaintance, and gave him a distinguished rank amongst the eminent patrons of the liberties of America and morals of mankind. Who though happy in a flourishing and respectable family, generously expended his benevolence through various degrees of agreeable connections to the human race at large, nor bounded his prospects of happiness by the narrow circle of the visible creation or the transitory objects of time and sense."

The best biography of William Edmond is the following obituary notice.

CONNECTICUT HERALD

Tuesday Aug. 11 1838

"We learn (says the Herald of the 3d inst.) that the Hon. William Edmond, formerly a Judge of the Superior Court, died at his residence in Newtown on the 1st inst. He was over 80 years of age. This brief paragraph is all the obituary notice we have seen of the Hon. Wm. Edmond — of a statesman who has filled a large space in the





councils of the State and Nation — of a Jurist who has been eminently distinguished both at the Bar and on the Bench. Where are his contemporaries in fame? Are there none left to do some reverence to the memory of as pure-minded a man as ever lived, now that he has gone the way of all the earth? Alas! of his companions but few survive, and they, perhaps, by reason of age and infirmities, forgetful of one whom they once so much loved and respected. It is believed Judge Edmond was over 85 years of age when he died. The writer of this became acquainted with him after he had advanced far towards what is ordinarily the end of life's journey, but possessing still a mind of unusual power, and with all the vigor of youth. He was at this period distinguished for superior intellectual attainments and for great purity of character. None stood higher in the estimation of their fellow men, and none have gone down to the grave leaving a more endearing memory behind him."

"Judge Edmond graduated at Yale College in 1777. He afterwards came to the bar, and was an eminent practitioner in Fairfield County for many years. His name is associated as contemporary with Edwards, Ingersoll, Ellsworth, Reeve, Swift, Smith, and other distinguished Jurists of our State."

"In 1798 he was elected a Representative to Congress from this State, the duties of which station he discharged with high reputation to himself and with singular fidelity to the interests of his constituents, many of whom still live to speak gratefully of his unwearied exertions in their behalf and for the common welfare. He was often a representative of his town in the General Assembly, and was a member at the session when the School Fund was originated. He was also a member of the committee to whom that subject was referred. One party, as is well known, wanted the money supplied to the support of the clergy; another wished it appropriated to common school education."\*

"He was a strong Federalist and not a democrat in the

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\*Note. Judge Edmond secured the appropriation for the schools.





political sense. It is to Mr. Edmond and other *such* democrats that we are indebted for the present school fund, and not to the modern patent democracy, who have recently claimed the merit as theirs. He was chosen by the people in the year 1805 to the House of "Assistants," a body of talented men, being the "upper house" of the Legislative body, and who also then constituted the Supreme Court in this state. He continued in this station until he was transferred to the bench in 1807, as a judge of the Supreme Court, to which office he was annually appointed for a period of 12 years in succession, and until the reorganization of the Court under the present Constitution of this State. (This was when the country went Democratic and Jacksonian and he thought it was going to ruin.) In the performance of his duties in this responsible situation, as in all others, Judge Edmond was an eminent example of unbending rectitude of mind. His associate Judges entertained towards him personally the highest esteem, and for his judgment the highest respect. His written opinions as published in our reports, are evidence of his being an investigating lawyer and a sound judge."

"Nor should it be forgotten that the Hon. William Edmond was a soldier of the Revolution. He was in the battle at Fairfield (Kumpo) occasioned by the predatory incursions of the British under Tryon, where he was severely wounded in the knee, by a musket ball from the enemy. Let the writer relate an occurrence after the wounded soldier had been carried home from the field of battle. The authority for it was Judge Edmond himself some 25 years since. His knee was badly shattered by an ounce ball, and after some months had elapsed (nearly a year, if rightly recollected) the wound instead of healing was daily growing worse; it had at length become so dangerous as to call for a consultation of surgeons. This consultation resulted in their opinion that he must have his leg taken off above the knee to save his life. This was announced to him: "No," said he, "If I must die I shall die whole." The faculty went to meeting (it was on Sunday) expecting to







make the amputation on their return. The surgical instruments being left in his room, with the aid of a servant he opened the saddle-bags, selected the tools and commenced operating. He had studied anatomy on his bed of sickness, and was already quite proficient in the science. He made incisions to the bone with his own hand, (his technical description of the operation is not remembered but in substance) he cut lengthwise and crosswise — laterally and diagonally — laid bare the fracture — took out a splintered bone — adjusted the knee-pan — removed the diseased portions, cleansed the wound in all its parts — replaced the flesh in its position, bandaged up his leg, and then quietly waited the return of his medical advisors from meeting. Upon examination of the patient and his proceedings their surprise was as great as the operation was successful. It is true he had a stiff knee through life, but his limb was saved. Fortitude, industry, and perseverance were his prominent characteristics both in public and private life. His heart had ever been from his youth a home for religion and virtue, and he has gone down in a good old age to the place appointed for all living with the highest honors." Judging by this notice newspapers were no more condensed in style than the private letters of that period.

In 1796 Federalism endorsed Washington's administration which included the Jay treaty and Hamilton's sound financial policy. It upheld the Central Government, against Jefferson and his followers who sympathized with the French Revolution. It was not until after the War of 1812 that the Federal party in Connecticut was forced out of power and Grandfather Edmond and Holbrook Curtis, his son-in-law, were always Federalists and Whigs. In 1833 when 78 years old William Edmond wrote a long and comprehensive letter about the national bank saying what we now know to be true, that Duane had been made a goat to save President Jackson's face, when he wished to put the bank out of existence.

William Edmond's daughter, Polly, who married Col.





[1794]

Starr, was his only child by Elizabeth Chandler. By Elizabeth Payne he had first my grandmother who was born in 1798; Sarah 1800, who married Dr. Booth; William Payne, a lawyer, born 1802, who died in 1829; Ann, 1804, who remained single, and Robert 1805, a physician, who married Maria Livingston Delaplaine, of Philadelphia.

The letters to Polly were written when she was at school in Hartford and later when Judge Edmond was in Congress in Philadelphia and Washington. If, instead of giving so much good advice, he had described the wonderful people then living, they would be of more general interest. The bits about the fashions, the mourning worn for George Washington, and Mrs. Adams' virtues are the plums of the collection. Like Grandfather Curtis and my own father, he left his wife at home busily having babies and wrestling with domestic problems, while he dashed about on Public business and incidentally had a good time. The difficulty of getting servants, or men to do outdoor work in the country, is evident from the very first, and frequently Grandfather Edmond congratulates my grandmother upon finding both "colored" and "Irish" in Watertown. That they had ideas of deportment and learning, and that there was no lack of what we consider "society," although they had little money and few luxuries, one perceives from the following correspondence.

NEWTOWN, June 4th 1794.

(Addressed to P. E. E. in her 10th year)

MISS POLLY EDMOND,  
Hartford.

The moment you break the seal of this letter, my dear child, and read the name at the bottom, you will perceive that your Papa has not forgotten his promise. He remembers his little daughter at Hartford — he reflects with a pleasing concern on her situation and deeply interests his





[1794]

heart in her happiness — he fondly hopes that a little time will reconcile her to absence for a few months from her Mama, and that she will be too much a woman to repine at her situation. Yes my dear, I know you will consider that nothing but the most earnest desire to have you improve in whatever can make you worthy of love and esteem could reconcile your parents to an hour's absence. You know I have told you a hundred times and written in your little books almost as often, "to be good is the way to be happy" — be good, my dear, be amiable, and you shall be happy — happy as parents can make you. You will often think of Newtown — let that remind you of the reasons for your absence from home, and let no moment be lost.

I need not tell you to respect Mrs. Caldwell and Mrs. Church, Miss Payne and Miss Patten — everybody will respect those that deserve it and I know you will love *them*. It will be your duty and interest to respect them — good manners require it from you, and let me beg of you never to forget it. Be complaisant and obliging to all — it is a tribute easily paid and they will reward you with their love. I hope you have too much respect for yourself to be a *romp*, and above all animals I hate a *tattler*. Let your secrets (if you have any) be sacred to the bosom of friendship — Maria is your friend, you may trust her, she loves you and will pardon little faults — if you conduct as you ought to do, I shall certainly know it, and it will give me pleasure. I shall see all your behaviour in my magic looking-glass as plain as I used to discover what you had been doing by your eyes — this magic glass is fastened to a little Bell that rattles terribly whenever you sit crooked, laugh loud, look sullen, behave rudely, forget your courtesy, and the like. Whenever you forget yourself (but I hope you never will) you must think what a rout there is in my study.

Your Mama will write to you about your mates — you must write to her and me as often as you can — Mrs. Winthrop will tell you all the news. The present of





[1796].

oranges you desired me to bring home I forgot in my hurry. I told them your request and they are much obliged to you. I have promised Miss Betsey Perry to make her amends at another time. Miss Flora's mother continues in a poor state of health, and I believe she will not come to Hartford. Be so kind as to present my best respects to Mrs. Caldwell, Mrs. & Mr. Church, Miss Payne & Miss Patten. I hope you are in health, be careful to preserve it — behave as well as you can, & you will have the best wishes of your Parents and Friends.

William Edmond.

In the time between these letters His first wife died and he married Elizabeth Payne Feb. 14th, 1796.

HARTFORD May 15th 1796.

To MISS POLLY EDMOND,

Newtown.

MY DEAR POLLY.

Your Mama and myself are both at the place of date in the full enjoyment of health, and only want to know you are partaker of the same privilege to make us completely happy. I was extremely sorry to leave you behind — your company here would have been very agreeable, but when I reflect on the dangers you have escaped (as the measles are here and all along upon the road) and the very little pleasure election affords, I believe you acted wisely in consenting to stay where you are — for as it happened the rain has rendered the road as muddy as you ever saw it, and the poor deputies in their procession to the meeting house were forced to hobble along in the mire, very few ladies attended the service — there was nothing brilliant in the business — the music was solemn, and everything dull as you can possibly conceive, so that you have very little to regret in not being present.

I have not yet seen Mrs. Church but learn that Mr. Church has not yet arrived from his voyage. The time





[1796]

before we return I know will seem long to you; I hope however if the school begins tomorrow, as was expected, you will find your time as agreeably spent, and I am sure much more profitably for yourself, then you could have spent it possibly, amidst the noise, the tumult, and the smoke of the City.

You will not omit any opportunity to improve yourself in singing—it is certainly an accomplishment, and perhaps you may not have another so good opportunity. A respect for your character which a young girl ought to prize as of infinite value, will preserve you from *rambling* if you reason on the subject, and a regard for your health (especially as your constitution is feeble) makes a steady regular behaviour of very great importance. A good report of your conduct on my return would increase both my affection and esteem. I cannot persuade myself you will forget for a moment to treat Mrs. Lott with kindness and respect and listen to her advice. Removed from all your relations, you have now an opportunity to act like a woman of sense and to show yourself superior to that little whining uneasiness that too often sets little girls sobbing when they are out of sight of their parents, and cannot hold by the apron string any longer. My happiness on my return will much depend on the account given of your behaviour—we talk of you daily and shall rejoice to meet you. I shall write to you every opportunity I have and you must not omit to write to me by the post on Saturday as I told you. You must direct your letter to me as follows:

William Edmond, Esq.,

Member of Assembly at Hartford

When your letter is completed Mr. Mathew Curtis will be kind enough to give it to the post if you deliver it to him in season.

My compliments to Mrs. Lott and all friends—adieu my dear child, be a good girl & Heaven will bless you.

—William Edmond.

P. S. Your Mama sends her love to you.





[1797]

NEWTOWN, July 29th A. D. 1797

DEAR POLLY

We received yours by the Post and were happy to hear you enjoyed your health, should have written in return but was absent when the Post passed through town. You make no mention of the six dollars I sent to you, of course suppose you had not received my last letter at the time you wrote yours, which by the by, you omitted to date. You mention our coming to Hartford. It is true we had flattered ourselves with the prospect, but a variety of causes have prevented us hitherto, and I begin to think will prevent us altogether. Among other things we have particularly to regret your Mama's want of health. She has been quite ill for about ten days past, but at present is somewhat better. Riding appears to fatigue her extremely and I am apprehensive a journey to Hartford in this hot season would be more than her present state of health would with safety endure.\* I have been almost tempted on account of your Mama's health to recall you from school, but were both loth to deprive you of the advantages you possess for improvement. Hope your attention to your studies and to your own interest will repay us for submitting to the inconvenience arising from your absence.

I expect to be absent at New Milford next week — at Danbury at Court the week following. In the hurry of business perhaps I shall not write but you must on no account fail to write to your Mama. It is what she has a right to expect from a daughter, and may afford her some little amusement in my absence. Your account of the 4th of July was pleasing. It is a day never to be forgotten by Americans, not merely to be remembered as a day of festivity, but a day that should call to our minds the gratitude we owe to the Author of all good, who enabled America to tear herself off from the British Government (of which we were before a colony) and by that means escape being embroiled in that affecting scene of blood

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\*According to another letter they drove in a "chaise."





[1797]

and slaughter which for years past has disgraced Europe, and been the painful source of many a heartfelt sigh.\* When you are older and begin to read history you will doubtless have a curiosity to attend to this subject. We expected you would have furnished us with further specimens of your drawing. It is a fine art and worthy a very particular attention. To imitate nature in her diversified production is next to possessing a creative power. A Mistress in this art with the help of a lively imagination added to a little industry, and a few colors, may soon create a little wilderness of her own, and exhibit the beauties of May in the cold of December. Your dancing too I wish you not to omit. It is an exercise both healthy and innocent when reasonably conducted. Mr. Griffith exhibited his Ball on Thursday evening at Doctor Perry's. I received a card and had the curiosity to attend. You would be surprised to see the improvement your little companions have made for so short a time not only in Dancing but particularly in politeness and good manners. There is no giggling, no romping, no rudeness, no coarse laugh. You would certainly have been delighted, if you have any taste for propriety, at the ease and decency with which every one conducted (except a few instances of crooked shoulders and stiff elbows which always happen in large collations). We had several country Dances &c. Miss Charlotte Booth and the Master gave us a Minuet — she is a fine girl — dances well — behaves prettily, and her modesty and good sense secure to her the affection and esteem of all of her acquaintances. Sally dances well, is very gay, but I do not so often hear her praised. The little Misses Julia Perry, Sukey Booth &c bid fair to rival several that are much older than they. The young Masters too deserved commendation, but I cannot speak of them all. When you return you may possibly, if a good girl, witness their improvement yourself. You will do your-

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\* Note. The French Revolution which the Federalists disapproved and Jefferson extolled.





[1798]

self the justice I hope to show the highest respect for the lady of the house where you reside and the Ladies who have the Care of your education. You will present my respects to them — to Mr. Church — Mr. Hopkins and friends. Mrs. Edmond unites hers also. Adieu, be a good girl & Heaven will bless you. Yours Affectionately.

William Edmond.

P.S. Mr. Jonathan Booth and family are well.

(EXCERPT)

PHILADELPHIA June 18th A D 1798

Believing as I do that you need the articles you mention, and hoping from your behaviour you deserve them, it would be a pleasing task to me to supply them; the shoes I can easily furnish & the shawl if I knew what kind of a shawl you would choose — but with respect to a bonnet the question arises how is it to be carried, to put it in a trunk is the only possible mode of conveyance & to press it so close as to prevent the clothes in the trunk from fretting must be fatal to it. Indeed write me how it is to be done. I think you must not count much on my bringing one. By the by, I do not recollect to have seen any pink, but thousands of almost every other color and striped & chequered as well as plain & I cannot say but in all the fashions that have been in use since the flood, or since bonnets were in fashion. If I should attempt therefore to bring one, you must hazard the chance of a man over forty happening to jump in judgment & taste with a Miss of thirteen; that there are handsome ones here (in my opinion) is unquestionable, but to say which of them is in fashion at this time would puzzle a wiser man than myself.

I hope you will write to me next Monday for I suppose you will get this on Saturday, and tell me how you all are as to health, very particularly whether your Uncle Cyrus has been to see you about moving — how your





[1799]

Uncle John's wife is, whether she has recovered her health — and particularly as to the health of Mrs. Mary Ann Nichols, if recovered or not. I heard yesterday that her husband was very lately in good health. You will also give me any other information you may have. Tell your Mamma she must look for me by the middle of July or sooner if the affairs of the Union will permit. I enclose you a Newspaper by which our friends will discover that an act has passed to put a stop to any intercourse with the French. I have written so many and so long letters for your last weeks entertainment; you must tell Maria to forgive my not writing to her at present. Give my love to your Mamma and sister and to friends.

W E.

N.B. David was well last Friday he tells me by a line of that date.

PHILADELPHIA Feb'y 17th AD 1799

DEAR POLLY

Your favor of the 10th instant was duly received on Friday. I shall not undertake to settle the *question* of *laziness* between you and Uncle David before my return, perhaps it would be safest for you both to settle that matter between you, and agree not to expose one another. You say that what you have spun in four days if made into cloth would make four yards of Diaper, if you proceed at that rate I think I shall have a most enormous bill to pay to the Weaver. I am glad notwithstanding you have begun the business, every woman not born to an independent Fortune ought to know how to spin & every other branch of business that is done in a family. Without this kind of knowledge, she never will be able to discharge in a graceful manner the office of a Mistress of a family, her servants if she have any will much despise and ridicule her for her ignorance. She will fall into contempt with her own house-





hold & have the mortification to find her order perpetually contradicted or disobeyed, on the other hand if humble poverty should be her lot and that is a lot to which every one is exposed from a thousand accidents, how wretched would be her situation "to labor and to spin she knows not and to beg she is ashamed." How many thousands in the world who have been brought up with tenderness in affluence and ease, who considered themselves as "lillies of the vale not subject to toil or to spin" who on a reverse of fortune, have been forced to earn their bread by the sweat of their brows, and have exclaimed in the bitterness of tears — Oh! That my Parents had taught me when young to labor, that my hands might now in the hour of misfortune contribute to my necessities.

As a necessary part of female education therefore I consider the art of the Distaff the buzzing wheel & the tory reel together with the noble science of Pancake and custards. A lady delicately brought up & every way accomplished except in the science of household concerns, if she ever happens to be reduced, will find more malice than pity with the illiterate & vulgar. The language of ill nature & of envy is this "She is no better flesh and blood than I." "She may work as well as I." "She will now find what it is to work as well as other poor folks." "She will find something else to do besides priming before the glass. Let her sell her muslins & moraus, worse things are good enough for her &c &c." And the moment she turns her back these ill-natured wretches will spout out the tongue & point the finger of scorn. These things I have seen in my day and from my experience of the wickedness of the unthinking multitude I wish my daughter so to be educated, that with the learned she may be respected as a scholar, with the Polite, that she need not blush for her awkwardness with the Industrious, that she may be respected as useful in society, & with the illiterate and vulgar she may command their respect — with such accomplishments I would wish to see her mild in her manners, tender





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to the unfortunate, modest & unassuming with her equals, condescending to such as feel themselves depressed, ever ready to allow to merit its just value and scrupulously abstaining from censure & especially towards those of her own sex.

I expect when you read this you will consider it a little like an old story or a dull sermon, that Papa is always preaching how he would have me behave. But remember my Dear your future happiness and worth can alone be his object; that while he wishes to see you virtuous, amiable and worthy he has not a wish to abridge you of the innocent amusements suited to the natural sprightliness of your age. Every thing I have recommended is perfectly consistent with a lively and cheerful disposition and can be no restraint to any degree of social vivacity within the limits of innocent indulgence — should it appear otherwise to you, look up the pages in your trunk and read them to Betsey hereafter when she is fourteen.

Your Father

W.E.

PHILADELPHIA, Feb'y 23rd 1799

MY DEAR DAUGHTER

Your favor of the 17th of February came safe to hand the 22d for which you have the thanks of a Father that loves you. Your Uncle David was right in his observation that “excuses were wholly inadmissable with me” unless indeed they are of such a nature as to prove the *neglect or failure unavoidable*, and, even then they are unnecessary for two reasons, the one is that it is enough to be troubled with our own disappointments and perplexities, without being obliged to hear a long & pitiful tale about the hurries, perplexities & disappointments of others. The other reason is that where a true and genuine Friendship subsists, it is always presupposed, that the party never will forget what is due to Friendship or ever be guilty of any





*neglects* except such as arise from inevitable necessity. To begin to apologize therefor is always a confession of a *wrong* or a *jealousy*, neither of which should ever be suffered to exist between real friends, for these reasons, My Dear, and because I wish that my Daughter should never do, or omit to do anything that would implicate blame or need an apology. I never am fond of excuses or apologies. Suppose you had said David was in pursuit of the ladies & you had a poor pen—the reply naturally would be, was there no other penknife in the neighborhood but his? Had not your Papa credit enough at the stores to furnish one? Or have you not skill enough to make one for yourself? After all your excuses then you see (if you had attempted any) you might not only have failed in your defence, but subjected yourself to the imputation of want of *candor*, a crime of which I hope my Daughter never will be guilty towards any person breathing, much less toward her Parents.

I regret most sincerely that your little sister\* is unwell. I hope it may be nothing more than a cold, even that seems too much for such a little innocent creature that never thought of any harm in her life. I am sure you will pity her, and do every thing in your power to render her comfortable & happy as possible. I am not anxious to have her go alone at my return or indeed before the weather grows warm. Such little creatures are so much exposed when they first begin to totter about, from the five and a thousand other accidents that it is scarcely to be wished that they should walk before they begin to have some little reason to govern themselves. Give my love to her in a sisterly & affectionate manner & kiss her for me.

The wood you received by the hand of your cousin David must be a source of consolation, if you have a winter as severe as it is here, for myself I never spent a more uncomfortable one in my life, there is scarce a clear *sunshiny* day in a week upon an average and you know how dull

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\*Elizabeth Edmond.





[1799]

weather affects me. What with a headache and face-ache I am under affliction almost half of my time, but I flatter myself with a release from this city in a short time & the prospect of better days.

I shall be able to account for the failure of a *certain letter* on my return, neither of you have guessed the reason of its failure. The prosperous state of Mr. Horton's family I hear with pleasure. So many children if they live together in unity as brothers and sisters ought to live, may be a source of happiness & comfort to each other, when the parents that now watch over them with the envy of affection, and tender care, are removed to a world of silence and everlasting repose.

Four days I think will be rather a short allowance for a 200 miles march in the beginning of March, when the roads in all probability will be horrid indeed. If however I could travel with a rapidity equal to my wishes I should not loiter for one night on the road, but I must stand in my lot & take a chance with my neighbors. We have already taken a stage to prevent disappointment, will have our tools packed & be ready to start when our service is expired without beat of drum. I have almost finished this little sheet & shall not probably write you again from this place before my return.

That you may be in all respects a good girl, enjoy the protection of the Father of the Universe, and the affection of those who set a value on virtue is the wish of a parent's heart. Give my love to your Mamma & to David. Assure them of my perfect consideration & esteem. Your affectionate Father

Wm Edmond

Saturday Feb'y 23rd 1799.

PHILADELPHIA Decr 7th 1799

DEAR POLLY

This comes to you as the slight evidence of the affection of a parent who wishes you happiness and future pros-





perity. He hopes you will not think it unreasonable or improper, that he should require of you submission to his pleasure for a few short months, after he has submitted to the indulgence of most of your humors for so many years, during which time he has clothed, schooled & supported you. What he wishes is simply this, that you would adopt such a line of conduct as is best calculated to establish such a kind of character as your reason teaches you would be most desirable to sustain, for you are now old enough to have some kind of a character of your own, & if you do not take some pains so to conduct, as to establish a character yourself, the world will give one, whether you will or not, and very probably such a one as you may by no means like. Under fourteen the foolish speeches and inconsiderate actions of a girl are in a manner overlooked & forgiven as proceeding from a thoughtless and playful disposition common to children of that age. But after fourteen the same actions which before that age would be pardoned as childish levities will then be censured as downright nonsense & folly, and charged directly to the score of a want of understanding, or in other words what might be allowed to be *pretty* in the child, will be justly esteemed *silly* in the woman, and it is the character of a woman of some sort you are now to sustain. There are some qualities annexed to the word woman, which are merely accidental and have nothing to do in reality with character, in the sense in which I am now speaking of it, such as a *rich* or a *poor* woman, a *handsome* or a *hard favored* woman & the like but there are certain general Epithets which go the whole length of a character. Such as a *virtuous woman*, an *amiable woman*, a *vicious woman*, an odious woman, which have no dependence on riches or poverty & but very little on personal beauty or deformity. Every woman must be ranked under one or the other of two heads. She will be considered as *Virtuous* or *Vicious* or *Amiable* or *Odious* in proportion as her conduct approaches the one or the other of these opposite characters.





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And the English language furnishes a great variety of words, or epithets, calculated to express the degrees, by which a woman rises to the full and complete characters above mentioned. If I had time I would give you a scale by which a woman is considered as ascending to virtue and amiableness or descending to vice and infamy — *as this*

A thoughtless	}	slut	Or this	}	Woman	
Careless			A careful			
Nasty			prudent			
Lazy			steady			
An Unsteady	}	girl	an Industrious			
A rude			Neat			
Bold			Discreet			
Noisy			an elegant			
Silly			an accomplished			
Debauched			Virtuous			
An Infamous	}	woman	Kind			
An Idle			Amiable			
A gossiping						
A Tatling						
An Immodest						
An Imprudent						
An Unchaste						
A Scolding						
A vicious						

All these you will perceive are qualities independent of rich cloathing or a pretty face. All the qualities named on the right may stick to a woman possessing both riches and regular features, while an unfortunate complexion may render itself entitled to the character on the left. You will be able my Dear I hope to improve upon these few hints, and after fully considering the subject I want you to send me an exact catalogue of all the epithets you would





[1799]

wish to have your friends apply to you when they are settling the state of your Character, and also a particular statement of such part of your conduct since I left home, as you suppose will be good evidence in support of your deserving the epithets you shall chuse and such part of your conduct as may be improved by your enemies to fix upon you the odious character. By so doing you will turn your attention to a subject *interesting*, very *interesting* to yourself and add to the pleasure of a parent that is sincerely desirous to see you amiable & to render you rationally happy.

W.E.

Kiss your little sister for me and be kind to her for my sake. She may live to reward your kindness & one day be your nearest & your dearest & your best friend.

(EXCERPTS)

PHILADELPHIA Decr 23rd A.D. '99

MY DEAR DAUGHTER

I approve of your conduct in answer to the invitation you had, not that I at all approve of an unforgiving disposition, or would be over punctilious where there was an apparent return to decency, but respect to ourselves and our character ought to be such as to teach others that we are not to be the sport of their whim & caprice and that friendship is too sacred a name to be violated upon every ill founded jealousy.

I have written to David to be an Orator if he can, tell him if he undertakes it not to disgrace the subject. His language must be pure and *chaste* as the *private character*, sound as the policy & energetic as the sword of the citizen, the Statesman and the Hero whose eulogium he speaks.

Congress have passed a Resolution to erect a Marble monument to the Memory of Gen'l Washington at the Federal City — to request his Lady and family to permit his body to be removed there & be buried under it — to wear mourning the remainder of the Session themselves —





[1799]

to dress all the ornaments in the Hall & hang the windows in black curtains — to appoint an Orator to deliver a Eulogium on Thursday this week, to walk in procession on that Day to the Church where it is to be delivered and also recommending to the president to recommend to the Citizens to wear a badge of mourning for thirty days &c &c — The ladies in the City have already many of them adopted trimmings recommended by the Queen — I would describe it if I could. Suppose the dress White, a black ribbon an inch & half wide to go round the body drawn tight a little below the swell of the breasts, another of the same width, to begin at the middle of the ribbon making an angle on the centre of the back just over the fold of the gown, where the ribbon that passes round the body passes under the folds, then carrying each end of the ribbon one over the right and the other over the left shoulder — bring the ends down on the side they pass over the shoulder till they meet the ribbon that goes round the body; or in other words fasten the last described ribbon by the middle on the centre of the back as low as where the other comes round & so as to make a corner, then carry one end over the right shoulder & down on the same side back of the breast to the other ribbon & so of the left so as to have the appearance of confining the arms back, on the bosom a bow of 12 ends of narrow black ribbon about half inch wide — the cap a high crown made round with foldings from the border to the top on every side about 5 or 6 inches high, drawn with a cord at the border and no ribbon round the head between the crown and the border, a bow in front, on the top, and behind of black like the one on the bosom. This is one form only of a thousand, and there is no certain fashion, in this case the hair was down on the forehead like a child & below the cap border (The remaining lines of this letter are lost).





[1800]

(This letter is to my great grandmother Elizabeth Payne Edmond.)

(EXCERPTS)

PHILADELPHIA Jan'y 7th AD 1800

DEAR ELIZABETH

The care of a woman that has children is certainly great and she that performs the task well deserves honor here and Immortality hereafter. Would children only know a Parents care it would seem as if they never would be guilty of subterfuge but confidence and plain dealing, my dear, are the most substantial evidences of genuine affection, sincere esteem and perfect love, though as you know I have never boasted much of either, but it is but justice to myself to say that in absenting myself because I believe duty and the good of my family require it, I do violence to the warmest wishes of my heart—that is if the happiness of my family was not dearer to me than my own ease, or my own pleasure, a few days would finish our separation—I shall not have an opportunity this post to forward what you requested if practicable you will know by the next. I perceive that matrimony is still in fashion among you. Joy to them that win. Give my love to those you know I esteem & be assured of my unceasing regard. Yours as ever—W E.

(EXCERPTS)

PHILADELPHIA February 6th A D 1800

MY DEAR POLLY

. . . . .

A few days since I cast my eye upon an entertaining little story of a certain marble head, invented for the purpose of amusing the proprietor at the expense of the ignorant and the credulous. This Head by the management of the owner, was reputed to have the power of answering, with a distinct and audible voice, to every question that was put to it, without entering into a description of the manner in which the deception was practiced. I will only notice at this time, two questions that were put to this Head, the one by a single, and the other by a married





[1800]

Lady, together with their respective answers. The first fair enquirer, led by what was uppermost in her own mind, and which no doubt stands foremost in the thoughts of many a pretty & many a giddy girl asked the Head "What she should do to be *extremely beautiful?*" received for answer "Be extremely virtuous." Satisfied with the answer she retired. The Matron then came forward, and very gravely enquired whether "her Husband loved her?" to which the Head replied, you will "find your answer by observing his behaviour." These questions to be sure, do not appear to be the wisest in the world, but I submit it to your own understanding whether there is not something worthy of observation in the answers. The first answer is a prescription which embraced a great variety of particulars, and which ought to be sought with industry preserved with care and found in the possession of every lady whatever may be her age, rank or condition in life. It is a prescription suited to every shape, every complexion and every countenance.

With respect to the other answer as I cannot suppose you yet very anxious about the love of your husband, I would at present make no comments any further than to observe that the sentiments and value of a heart never fail to discover themselves more or less by the behaviour of the person; and if so propriety of deportment is essential to a good reputation. I dined last Thursday with the President and his Lady. Mrs. Adams is certainly a respectable woman, had you seen with what ease, dignity and propriety she presided at her own table, surrounded by about thirty gentlemen, you would have needed no arguments to persuade you of the value of such accomplishment and to be able to perform this office handsomely how much it adds to the respectability of a ladies character. To describe to you the fashions would be as impracticable as to reduce chaos to order, they are as changeable as a little girl's wishes, constant in nothing but inconstancy, the leading features of the ton seem to be drawn caps with lace borders, that





sit as close to the head as the bark to a tree, black velvet bonnets trimmed with furs of the same dimensions with the cap and front piece as wide as two fingers. This is ornamented with feathers. The want of sides is supplied by large black or white veils &c. Kiss little Betsy, my love to your ma, & be a good girl W E

PHILADELPHIA March 24th A.

As I seldom visit farther than Congress Hall I should fail if I attempted to give you an account of the fashions, and indeed if I could it would be of very little use unless I could send a Miss and materials to put you in the ton, and even then I may much doubt if it would be considered as a kindness. Some of our ladies that lived in a famous age have been ridiculed by sartorial epithets for the enormous extent of their hoops. The Moderns seem to have fallen into a contrary extreme, the white dimities and muslins stick as tight about the heels as the nature of the case will admit, panniers or pockets are utterly denounced, the head is loaded with curls, close caps favor and feathers and enveloped in a slimy veil, while the forlorn bosom is absolutely left exposed to the weather, without even a blush to shield it from profanation, and the same consequence seems to result in this case as in others, when a thing goes out of fashion, the art is almost lost, when Modesty is banished the blush takes its leave of the fair cheek, our Moderns therefore are desirous to substitute paint for those roses which nature denies them, for those games which invariably accompany modesty and simple neatness. The painting and the display of such Belles are often arranged in magnificent order, and the Men look at them with the same kind of curiosity and with as little real affection or esteem as they would view the brilliant trinkets in any shop or portraits of any other monster in nature. Men of sense or women of sense are not captivated with a pretty





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cap, a handsome bonnet, an elegant silk dress, a spun coat, a Macaroni hat, or a handsome walking stick, they look for other more useful, more durable, more endearing accomplishments, such as wealth cannot purchase, nor poverty take from them.

If a shoe pleased the taste, a cap delighted the fancy, or any other could excite solid admiration, a visit to the neighboring shops in a city would afford full gratification without the presence of the Belle or the Beau. In one shop we see brilliants and beads and buckles and diamonds and plate and fine swords without number — in another silks & satins without measure, in a third caps and shawls and bonnets innumerable, and in as many colors, shapes and fancies as would puzzle the whim of the most capricious for a choice and so of many other articles of dress. If one woman owned them all, it might purchase flattery, and command servants, but without some other charm, some more valuable requisites she could (neither gain nor retain if gained, either real love or solid esteem,) so incompetent are wealth and ornaments to secure the Empire of the heart or gain us one substantial friend. Who then that is *wise* would sigh for such baubles? and how contemptible those who give themselves airs merely because they happen to possess them. You will wonder perhaps “why Pa writes all this to me.” I will tell you my dear, *Because every Man and Woman that Makes a just estimate of Riches and ornaments will positively be both better and happier for it*, such an estimate would perfectly cure the wealthy of Pride and Vanity merely because they possess riches, and teach them a due respect to the *Poor*, who happen to be their Superiors in Mental Talents, virtues and amiable Personal accomplishments, on the other hand such an estimate would cure the Poor of a Foolish hankering for glittering baubles they can never obtain, and leave them to procure objects more durable, valuable and satisfactory. It would also guard them against the meanness of descending from the dignity of their own wisdom to flatter the Vanity or be subservient





[1800]

to the vices or follies of those who have no other pretensions to superiority but their wealth, in short such an estimate that after a pure conscience and reverence to our Maker is the first great step to the threshold of Contentment and happiness, and I would take my children by the hand and help them to ascend it in their early days, I will now close this long letter, and leave the remainder of this little sheet for you to fill out with such observations as may occur to yourself and strike you most forceably in the perusal of it.

Kiss the dear little Eliza (Grandma) for me, be to her a good sister, give my love to your Ma, be kind and attentive to her and be assured of the affections of a Father

WM EDMOND

1620669

WASHINGTON Nov 27th AD 1800

DEAR POLLY

Immediately after closing my letters of this morning to your Mother The House formed a procession with the Speaker at their head in thirteen Coaches & Hacks attended by a number of Gentlemen on Horseback & proceeded to the Presidents house which is about one and a half miles from the Capitol, when Mr Speaker delivered the address in Answer to the Presidents speech and received his answer, — after a glass of wine & a bit of cake with the President we returned in the same order of procession back to the Capitol to proceed to business — this is the first time I have been at the Presidents house, and I would attempt to give you a description but I have no words, that would give you any tolerable idea of this superb Edifice, and if I had the narrative would rather have the appearance of a romantic tale conceived by an ardent & vivid imagination than a simple relation of facts, I shall therefore reserve the subject to some future evening when Providence may place me in the midst of my family & surround me with





[1800]

the objects I hold most dear to my heart, a situation which to my mind has infinitely more charms than all the splendour and parade the world can exhibit.

I should rejoice with you to spend the evening of this day in Connecticut and partake of the innocent recreations customary on such a day — I hope you will not there be unmindful of the gratitude we owe to our Maker for his continual care over us and who “openeth his hand and supplieth the wants of every living creature.” You will not I trust even at your age be altogether thoughtless while in pursuit of innocent recreation yourself, of the claim your Mother and Sisters have on your company, your kindness and attention, in my absence and will no doubt remember how much more noble & even delightful it is to a mind susceptible of tenderness & benevolence to communicate pleasure to others, than to be forever occupied in a narrow & selfish attention to our own pleasures and amusements. I hope you will exert yourself this winter to make home the habitation where innocence and peace are united; a mansion where content and happiness shall delight to dwell, and in so doing you cannot fail deeply to interest yourself in the best wishes of a father. Give my love to David if he is still with you. *Betsy & Sally* in your bosom, forget not that they are children, helpless, dependent — they may one day be able to return your tender offices, should they never, you will not fail of the supreme delight which arises from doing good. May Heaven bless you all, preserve your health, guard & guide you in the way you should go is the prayer of your affectionate father

Wm. Edmond

Give my Respects to *Betsy Adams* and to Friends — I expect *Jenny* is a very good girl; if I hear she is I will enquire for her sister.

(Jan. 7 10th-1801 Omitted —)





[1801]

(The first of this is omitted as it is another long dissertation.)

WASHINGTON January 24th 1801

DEAR POLLY . . . . .

But I will pass lightly over a subject so unpleasant as to suppose any young lady who regarded her reputation would suffer herself to fall under such a reproach. These observations you may find elsewhere but here they come recommended by the affection of a parent who wishes you to become all that is amiable — the ladies who visit at the Hall are much more beautiful than any I saw at Philadelphia, nature alone and not wash has painted their roses and their dress combines neatness, simplicity & elegance. Among the rest a certain Mrs Mason is considered a paragon of beauty and to this transitory charm is said to have united that easy elegance and suavity of manners which joined to a polished and improved understanding is calculated to secure the admiration she at first sight inspires, her husband however who is a Man of great fortune is rather a proof of her judgment than her taste & had he been a prudent man in my opinion would have tarried with her at home, the attentions of the beau Monde which she cannot fail to attract may lead her to make comparisons which can neither be to his advantage or her repose. Be true My dear to yourself, careful of your reputation, kind to your little sisters and Mama & you cannot fail of the love and esteem of a father and a friend

W Edmond

WASHINGTON Feb'y 22d Ad 1801

MISS P. EDMOND

I received your favor of the 4th of Feby instant giving an account of yours & Betseys return from Ridgefield this Day. I received at the same time your Mammass with an account of the family. I can easily imagine the difficulties you had to encounter in your return with such





[1801]

apparatus & such horses for sleighing as my brothers generally keep, the apprehensions of danger expressed by your Uncle Stiles, I have no doubt were such as he felt for your safety & not for his own, and which he uttered in the sincerity of his heart without once reflecting or suspecting that it was necessary either to suppress or disguise the truth by way of cordial to weak *nerves*—will you say he should have better known his company? I think not, or you would not say “I concurred with him in opinion”. In a case where both of you could see the real danger to have attempted to disguise it would have created distrust & increased your fears, had the danger been known only to him, which would you have preferred, to have him conceal the truth . . . . .

(*Some omitted and some lost—he continues—*)

. . . but whether it will be possible to get from here under several days from that time, is altogether uncertain as I find on enquiry that every Stage belonging to the City, has been taken up some weeks since for that time in particular—you will therefore have no occasion to be apprehensive for my health or safety, in case I do not reach home within three or four days of the time you might calculate.

The ground here is entirely free from snow and muddy in the extreme, but weather has for three days been pleasant and the lobby in Congress Hall crowded with beautiful young ladies—“how do they dress, Pa?”—indeed so various it is difficult to say. When I return, though I shall for want of terms be unable to describe, yet to your questions I may be able to say *aye or no*.

Give my love to your Mama & dear little Sisters—I shall rejoice if I find you in health to see how the little rogues have improved.

It is not probable I shall write to you again before I leave this. Heaven bless you & make you all happy.

W. Edmond.





[1801]

The following verses were written to my grandmother on her eighth birthday and although Judge Edmond wrote poetry all his life, these, with the few lines "Advice" are the only specimens which remain—

How beauteous is the rosy morn!  
Today's the day that I was born!  
For eight long years I've been a child,  
With trifles pleased, my actions wild,  
My thoughts employed on childish toys,  
My time all spent in childish joys,  
Great Power, whose universal care  
Thy Children keeps, O! hear my prayer!  
Teach infant lips, their Makers praise  
And to thyself, my reason raise;  
For thou art God, whose kindness kept,  
Me, while awake, and while I slept.  
Endow'd with health, or if in pain,  
Restor'd me to my health again,  
Thro' many a danger to this day  
Upheld and watched my devious way.  
Be gracious still—enlarge my mind,  
For thou art good, and great, and kind,  
Preserve my life—extend thy care  
And let me live another year  
Increase in knowledge, all that's good  
And above all, in Gratitude.

December 16th, 1806

Among my grandmother's letters from sisters and cousins while in New Haven at boarding school, one finds many of the same names, as those in letters to my grandfather Holbrook Curtis who was twelve years her senior. These girlish effusions give a quaint picture of the young people at that time, who with all their conscientiousness and formality, were fond of gossip, flirtation and dancing.





[1811]

NEWTOWN, Monday June 1811

MISS ELIZABETH EDMOND,

NEW HAVEN, CONN.

What my dear cousin shall I say, that we are lonesome since deprived of your enlivening society? not, but that we have time for reflection allowed us, I should have often regretted your departure as a diminution to my happiness, but the vanity of numerous domestic cares have so occupied our time and attention as to prevent our feeling the loss of your own or Papa's company as at any other period we should have done. We were a little disappointed at not seeing your Papa last Saturday as the day was so fine. By Mr R — we received a line from him requesting your Mama to forward by Mr. Botsford a few articles for your convenience at school, this was intended previous to the receipt of it. Do you wish to know how we succeed in domestic concerns? I answer beyond expectation with considerable fatigue, your Mama I fear feels the loss of your assistance that I endeavor to prevent by redoubling my own exertions — We have not had much company since you left us, my Aunts have not received as they intended. Mr. W. C. S. and Mr. B. spent Friday evening with us, Miss B Glover's call here is the principal. Tomorrow there is a party at Zoar at Mr. Curtis's\* to visit Miss Noyes, should I be one of the number you shall hear more of it. I will no longer let self engross my time, but tell you that your Mama is usually well. Sally enjoys better health than some time past. William, Ann, Maria, & little Robert enjoy health and happiness. Should anything be wanting let us know by your Papa or before. We wish much to hear, how you are situated, how pleased, what acquaintance you have acquired. The family all send love to your Papa and self. You are requested by your Mama to write by Capt B. — and send those articles you were

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\* This was my great grandfather, Salmon Curtis.





[1811]

requested to procure — Upon the chamber door in answer to a question I once made, if you would remember me after a short absence you wrote, "Yes, yes, yes," remember it now and write soon, my dear Betsey. Do purchase a quire of good letter paper for me or request your Papa to.

In haste I must say adieu while I remain affectionately

Yours

Maria

Do not tell me I have forgot how to write. If you can find good blk morocco shoes that will suit my measure do send a pr.

NEWTOWN 17th Sept. 1811

MISS ELIZABETH EDMOND

New Haven

DEAR ELIZABETH:

The stage did not leave in season to send for you last week — Mr. Beach will call for you today. I think it will not be practicable, at least not convenient for you to spend another Quarter at New Haven at present. You will of course bring home all your things. I wish you also to bring an old hat I left at Mr. Ropetin in his South front chamber closet. You will call on Mr. Coleman for his Bill for board — & Miss Hotchkiss for hers for tuition, & Mr. Beach will pay him, if you owe Jenny for washing pay her — or any other Debt, you will see that they are all paid so as to leave nothing behind unsettled, also give my respects to Mr. Coleman & his Lady — to Miss Hotchkiss

Wishing a speedy & safe return I am

with affection

W E

MISS E. EDMOND

N B Mrs. Coleman will remember the price agreed for board was \$2 per week.





[1811]

1811.

MISS E. EDMOND

New Haven (From her Cousin Maria Hopkins)

A moment only is allowed to say we are in usual health — and thank my dear Betsy for your interesting epistle by your Papa. I was delighted with your proficiency in the art of Drawing a specimen of which you sent Sarah. Continue my Dear girl to improve in this elegant accomplishment but do not in so doing neglect those more useful branches of science, a close attention to which will be forming your mind and manners for future life. A small portion of which can be devoted to this employment. Your dear Papa mentions you felt discouraged in perfecting yourself. In this like every other talent you may possess, time and patience only are the two powerful requisites. And these you may have. Sally I think will go to N — with your Papa. Do write us immediately. By Mr. Blackman do send me a comb and will forward the money by your Papa. Your Mama sends love with the family and would write you but time is not allowed her adieu — Mr. B. with Miss D goes

M

NEW HAVEN Oct 24th 1811

MISS ELIZABETH P. EDMOND

Newtown

Yes my dear girl the receipt of your letter did indeed give me pleasure. I had heard something of your illness and felt anxious to hear again. I rejoice that you are recovering. I hope your health will soon be confirmed and I hope you will not forget the author of all your blessings, the giver of every good gift.

Our friend Mrs. Coleman has a fine daughter and has given it the name of *his first wife*.





[1812]

Their family has quite changed in appearance since we were there. Mr. Coleman is recovering and intends taking a short tour soon.

I have procured the muslin for your Mamma and am glad to have an opportunity of obliging her. I hope she will employ me again if she wishes any errand of the kind done.

Miss Carpenter desires her love to you. My respects to your parents and love to sister Sally.

Yours

Sarah Hotchkiss.

Elizabeth dont let this first be the last letter I ever receive from you.

BERLIN June 1812

MISS ELIZABETH EDMOND,  
Newtown, Connecticut.

You will almost doubt my sincerity, dear Betsey, when I assure you of the pleasure I experienced in the perusal of your short epistle received by Mr. Gould when I was in Litchfield. But it was truly an augmentation of my happiness to hear once more from you all, notwithstanding I have so long delayed expressing my satisfaction at this unexpected proof of your affection; I was fearful before, that your remembrance of me was nearly extinct.

Yesterday afternoon I took tea in Washington at Mr. Goodrich's (this gentleman was the former minister in Ridgefield) when my cousins and myself were invited to meet Mrs. Cook of Danbury, on inquiry I found that your sister is now a highly valued neighbor of Mrs. C. As she leaves town tomorrow I determined to improve this opportunity of a conveyance to you, by which I might avail myself of many enquiries after the health and happiness individually of each member of the family.

I have narrowly escaped seeing your Papa several times,





[1812]

at the time he was in Litchfield last February, Catharine and myself were both absent

How is your Mama's health now, I hope her cares and avocations are not so numerous as when I left Newtown. They were then too great for her constitution to bear without preying upon her health. I hope to hear she has some good hand to assist her in domestic affairs, who is capable of lifting her burthen. What are cousin Sarah and yourself engaged in this summer? Were you so well pleased with the school in Newhaven as to induce your Papa to place your sister there this season?

Cousin William I suppose has probably left you before this to pursue those studies proper for his age. The rosy cheek'd Ann Maria, and smiling Robert who come next in my list of inquiry I should rejoice to see once more arm in arm going to school, do they continue as formerly inseparable companions?

I was in Newhaven in March and intended to have seen Jenny but after several enquiries I could not learn any information respecting her and the shortness of my stay prevented my devoting much time to a search for her abode. I hope your Mama has not relinquished the idea of visiting this part of Connecticut. She encouraged me with a belief that she should before long take this journey. Judge Reeve mentioned to me sometime since that when he saw you after your illness your countenance was not as healthful as formerly. I heard with regret that the ravages of disease had deprived you of that charming color, in your cheek that glowed and shown so fresh. But even this circumstance to the mind of my dear cousin will convey a moral lesson on the frailty of external beauty. I hope you will improve opportunities to write me often, and cousin Sarah too, I shall ever be happy to hear from you all. Kiss each of the children for me and remember me affectionately to your Parents. Often think of me as your affectionate

Cousin Maria.

*Note* My grandmother was removed from school in New Haven because they put an iron dog collar on her neck to make her sit up straight, as she was very tall.





MISS ELIZABETH EDMOND,

New Town

When I received your letter My Dear Elizabeth I did not intend it should remain so long unanswered but hope you will excuse me if I write one long enough now to make up for lost time. I have been to New Haven lately on a visit and spent three weeks very pleasantly. I saw your sister Sally frequently, she appears to be very well pleased with N Haven and I think she could not be otherwise. I called to see cousin Sarah Hopkins the first day that I heard she was in town but to my disappointment found she had gone home, I regretted it very much for I had a very great desire to become acquainted with her. I was very much gratified with a letter from her, she wrote she enjoyed herself very much in N Town and that it was very lively there.

I found quite an alteration among my acquaintances in N Haven, many of them have become subjects of this late revival of religion which you have undoubtedly heard of from your sister who is one of the number that entertains a hope, the awakening has spread more generally through Mr Herricks school than in town. Mr. Herrick is a very pious man & appears to be very much engaged in the cause at this time in particular and all other christians. I think it will be very gratifying to your parents to hear that Sally has become pious.

Betsey I think you must have some lonesome hours since your cousin left you and Sally from home too, then, do once in a while think of me with pity. I learn that you are not likely to lose Clarissa after all that has took place. & almost hope Esqr Stanley will never find any young lady that will receive his attention any more. When you write again do tell me how your Mama does for I should be extremely well pleased to hear from any of your particular acquaintance.





[1820]

You wrote me that you heard I was going to be married, but I cannot think you believed it or at least you will not when I tell you it positively is not so. Please to tell Maria I do not thank her for reporting such a story as that, all over New Haven. I have visited in Bridgeport since I left New Haven and saw the celebrated beauty, *Miss Pamela Hubbell*, who I have so *much* heard of, she told me she was acquainted with you and all the New Town ladies, & think her very handsome indeed.

Betsey I am almost angry with you when I think how long it is since I was in New Town and you have never returned the visit. I think you have almost forgotten me. Do write me the next opportunity and I will be more punctual in answering your letters than I have been, if you do not write soon I shall think you are angry with me for my negligence.

Please to give my respects to your Papa and all my acquaintances.

Yours, S. Hawley

August 21st tomorrow is my birthday I shall be 18 years old.

(From Grandma's brother while he was at Yale College. Imagine a college boy of today writing this sort of thing.)

NEWHAVEN February 22nd 1820.

MISS ELIZABETH EDMOND

Newtown

Conn.

DEAR SISTER

Wednesday afternoon has once more arrived and with it the usual respite from the labors of the week, and inclination, the main spring of all my actions, prompts me to again resume my pen for the purpose of holding a tacit conversation with my dear Sister. I shall first attempt to





answer your affectionate letter for which I assure you I feel particularly grateful as I am conscious of being entirely undeserving of so great a favor.

Now if you wish me to believe you as strict in the practice of your doctrine as your correctness in laying down the rudiments would seem to imply, it would add much to the weight of your argument. You doubtless remember the old saying, "example is often more powerful than precept," if you will continue to bear this in mind and act accordingly, you may expect at some future period to witness its exemplification. You need be under no apprehensions with regard to the reception of your advice authorized as it is by superiority of your maturity of judgment and ties of affection and friendship. Let me assure you however, my dear sister, if when endeavoring to administer consolation to an afflicted mind you imagined the cause of my depression of spirits to originate or indeed to have any connection with those trifling scenes in which I lately participated, you have entirely misconstrued my feelings and would to heaven it were of as little consequence. My studies though the most difficult of any in the whole College course are as agreeable as can be expected where nothing less than clearness and the most minute investigation can enable us to understand and prosecute them with success. I am at length convinced that regularity and perseverance to the attainment of excellence in any branch of science and that industry never fails of being rewarded. And although I do not expect to soar on the wings of fame to the temple of immortality, yet it is my ardent wish at some future period to become a respectable and I hope, useful, member of society. I have discharged my bills for the last term as far as my money would permit, the balance which is still unpaid amounts to twenty three dollars. Papa wished me to send my College bills as soon as receipted, but the want of opportunity has prevented me. My shoes are almost worn out & I wish those which Dibble had begun when I left, if com-





[1820]

pleted, might be sent immediately. Give my love to the family and

believe me your affectionate brother

Wm. P. Edmond.

Judge Edmond lived in a large house on Newtown Hill and when his portrait was painted, the artist also painted a landscape over the parlour mantelpiece. This house, my mother said, was burned down and with it most of the books brought to this country by Robert Edmond. The chairs in the library at Watertown were imported from France in 1816, and the chests of linen, *toile de jouey*, Lowestoft & Staffordshire china and various pieces of furniture belonged to my grandmother. She always adored her father, who is described as a "physical and mental giant," versed in classical knowledge, the law and medicine. He was relied upon for advice and counsel in the surrounding country. When he went to Philadelphia he rode on horseback, a matter of four days according to his letters. Mr. Cothren, the historian, said that in appearance and personality he resembled General Washington more than anyone he knew. I like to imagine him in small clothes, ruffled shirt and queue poring over his great leather books. Through the open window would come the smell of hay and one could see across the valley layer upon layer of blue wooded hills, clustering villages and white church steeples.

The settlers at Stratford had followed the Housatonic into the interior and several miles away at Zoar, Salmon Curtis lived upon land inherited from his grandfather Benjamin, son of Captain Josiah Curtis. His toryism made him unpopular and probably caused the bitterness evident in my grandfather's journal, 1814, 1822.

Holbrook Curtis graduated from Yale in 1807, when all New England was in a ferment from Jefferson's Embargo. This act, which, aimed at the British in retaliation for their impressing American seaman, practically killed the commerce and industry of the northern states. Feel-





ing ran so high in Connecticut there was even talk of secession, and it led, in the war of 1812, to the Governor of that State refusing at first to supply troops to the Federal army. The extracts from my grandfather's journal begin while he was studying law and teaching school in Newtown.

### Holbrook Curtis Journal

NEWTOWN, *Monday, September 1808.* Training of the militia to arms. Read but little, spent the evening at Mr. Chapmans.

*Monday.* Representatives chosen from Newtown, John Sanford and Simeon Beers, both Federalists.

*January 1809.* Read Swift part of the day, in the evening on account of a company coming from New Milford, attended a Ball at Mr. Josiah Glovers.

*Saturday.* Spent the day principally in company, the evening at Mr. David Nichols.

*Tuesday.* Read very steadily through the day, spent the evening in company with Messrs. Hicock & Sherman for the purpose of forming a society Constitution.

*Thursday February 9, 1809.* Spent the evening at Mr. Chapmans in company, news of a bill having passed for the repeal of the embargo in the lower house.

*Friday.* Studied, read papers through the day, in the evening read Churchills Poems.

*Feb. 26th 1809 . . .* Went in company with Aunt Nichols to Woodbury. Returned about sundown. Went with a company of young people to Brookfield. Returned about 3 in the morning.

*Saturday March 4th 1809.* Mr. Madison, the President elect, takes the chair of state, it is supposed the Embargo will come off partially this day. Read Livy in the evening.

*Thursday.* Read 50 Pages in Espionass. Embargo to come off partially the 15th of March.

*April 1809.* News of the English having quit Spain.





[1809]

*Tuesday.* Read 30 Pages in Swift, a trifle in Powel, & spent the evening at Mr. David Nichols in company with ladies.

*June 1st 1809.* . . . . Attended a Court, Beck versus Deming.

*Monday* . . . . in the afternoon heard a law suit. David Curtis was Plaintiff & I. Sherman and wife Defendants action of slander, there was no judgment obtained being adjourned.

*Wednesday.* Read a trifle in Blackstone also in *Ovids Art of Love.* (! !)

Spent the evening at Mr. Joseph Nichols.

Out in the evening, formed a society.

Read Shakespeare etc.

*Monday.* Training. Read but little, danced in the evening at the Widow B—'s. Made preparation for training.

*Tuesday.* Two regiments of cavalry and one of Infantry were collected in the street had 2 pieces and went through the common course of exercise. In the evening I attended a ball got to bed between 4 and 5 o'clock.

*1809 October* (age 22) Read a trifle in Pope, etc.

*Thursday.* Read 100 in Blackstone. very sick from smoking cigars, resolve I will smoke no more. spent part of evening at Mr. I. Glovers.

*Thursday.* Rode to Danbury in a snowstorm. spent the evening in drinking and such like business.

*Wednesday.* Played at nine pins went to bed in season.

*Thursday.* In the evening was examined for the oath and together with 5 others admitted, after the usual round of drinking went to my couch.

*Friday.* This morning after the oath was administered & after dinner I left town & came as far as E. Nichols.

*Thanksgiving.* Spent the evening at Mr. Glovers and Mr. Chapmans. Attended the contortions of a dancing master. (!)





[1810]

*Friday.* Read a trifle in the "Citizen of the World", wrote nearly a sheet full of papers in the afternoon & evening, entertain strong notions of in these days of quitting town.

*March 1810. Thursday.* Read a trifle of Poetry & little other matters, etc.

*Wednesday.* Read a trifle in *Taber on Purchases* spent the evening partly at *Judge Edmonds* (Note. This was in 1810 when my grandmother was only twelve, so all those years the families knew each other.)

*Thursday.* Attended singing school late in the evening.

*Thursday, May 1810* Attended to my boys, read *Henophon*, etc.

*Friday.* Read a trifle in the morning, in the afternoon rode home.

*Saturday.* Went to Bridgeport in the morning, did but little that day.\*

*Sunday* sailed from Bridgeport for New York. Went a little more than half the distance.

*Monday.* Arrived in New York a little before noon. Attended the theatre in the evening, tragedy the (illegible)

*Tuesday.* Travelled about the city, made observations, etc.

*Wednesday May 1st 1810.* Travelled about the city, spent a considerable time in the Battery, attended the play in the evening, tragedy *Alphonso of Castile*.

*Thursday.* Walked about as usual, in the evening had a supper of oysters.

*Friday.* Spent part of the day at Mrs. Mathieus, left New York for Bridgeport at 1.

*Saturday.* Arrived in Bridgeport 4 in the morning in Newtown at 4 in the afternoon.

*Sunday May 5th.* Walked about in the afternoon went home, staid over night.

*Monday.* Came into town, training of the militia, attended a ball in the evening.

\*He writes elsewhere of driving his "Cozen" in the "Chaise" which he gave after his mother's death to his sister, Mrs. Tomlinson.





[1812]

*Tuesday.* Attended to my school, read a trifle, spent the evening in company.

*Friday.* Heard a cause argued before General Baldwin. Some trouble of mind in these days.

*September 11, 1810. Tuesday.* Rode to New Haven, taken up with company.

*Wednesday.* Commencement day. attended to the exercises of the day, took a second degree, spent the evening at the Columbia Gardens.

*Thursday.* Went to Wallingford & saw Col. Humphreys cattle show.

*Friday.* Spent the day with Cozens & friends in Wallingford.

*Saturday.* Rode from Wallingford home by the way of Humphryville, called on some relatives.

*Monday.* Freemans meeting, attended in the afternoon, Federalists.

*Sunday, June 21st, 1812.* Attended church all day. Heard that there is a declaration of war.

*Tuesday.* Read but little. No talk but of war.

*Sunday July 19, 1812.* War has not yet exhibited herself in open Contest except on the Ocean where there have been mutual captures though the balance is much against the U. S.

*Sunday, August 30.* Attended Church, Bishop present, Confirmation, etc. The 17th of the present month Gen'l Hull surrendered an army of 2000 men to the English General Brock without firing a gun.

*Monday, Tues., Wednes., Thurs., Fri.* Taken up in reading Tacitus, &c. Rode home in the afternoon Fri., and Saturday read as usual.

*Sunday, Sept. 13, 1812.* Attended Church, heard 2 sermons from Mr. Burhans. Out of health. About the first part of August the *Guerriere*, a British 44, fell in with

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NOTE: (Captain Hull was presented with a "sword and an elegant pair of pistols" by the Connecticut Legislature which, although it had been averse to entering the War of 1812, as most of the New England Federalists had been, was proud that the first success at sea should be due to a Connecticut man.)





[1813]

the *Constitution* commanded by Capt. Hull and was so roughly handled by the latter that she struck and the next day was blown up to prevent her sinking.

*Sunday, Oct. 25, 1812.* Attended Church, Rode home.

*Monday.* Spent the day in doing but little.

*Tuesday.* Rode with my sister to New Haven, tarried overnight.

*Wednesday.* Returned from New Haven in the rain.

*Thursday.* Came in to town.

*Friday, Saturday.* Attended to my school. Read Livy.

*Sunday, 21st of March 1813.* Attended Church. Ensuing week until Friday attended to my boys, except Thursday when I visited schools. Friday, dismissed my school for ever being about to go to Watertown. A new era in life about to commence.\*

The following letter from one of his Noyes cousins speaks of his changed quarters.

WALLINGFORD APRIL THE 13 1813

HOLBROOK CURTIS, ESQ.

WATERTOWN

DEAR COUSIN

I had the pleasure of receiving your kind favor of the 6 Inst. informing me of your removal to Watertown. I am happy to hear you are pleased with your situation & hope you may find sufficient encouragement to settle there. As your Parents have felt anxious lest you should go to some distant part, they as well as other friends will be gratified to have you so near. I hope you will not be so engrossed in business but that you will visit us the ensuing summer.

You probably have heard of the Death of Uncle Philo. I am told he was quite resigned to Death. Our family are in usual health, except Ma, who has been confin'd the

\*The Selectmen asked him to go there and settle, wishing a lawyer in the place who would practise and also give advice as a man of education and brains. He was always called Squire Curtis, or Judge. The other families of that name were not related.





[1813]

fortnight past with the canker rash, but is now better and about.

Sally and myself have contemplated visiting N Town this spring, but I fear we shall be disappointed — perhaps we may go in the fall—I wish much to see my N Town friends. I have not heard from Clarissa since she left us; she probably gave you an account of her visit here; & meeting her old friend *E E* and so on.

I hear Charlotte Sanford is married. I don't see your name in the list—I suppose you wait till the war is over. I have nothing that will either interest or entertain you. I will therefore close and give Pa room to add a few lines. I need not tell you my Dear C—n I shall be ever happy to hear from you. The family join with me in love.

From your affectionate

Friend and Cousin

Ann Noyes

(" E. E." must have been Elizabeth Edmond. Here is " Clarissa " again)

HOLBROOK CURTIS,

WATERTOWN

DEAR SIR,

I am disposed to avail myself of the offer you make to take my son under your instruction, where you now reside; provided you are not subjected thereby to inconvenience & some person would like to send a son here in exchange. Mr. Bradley & a Lady well qualified for the business, will instruct in our Academy. If you will take it upon you to inquire for a good place for my son to board at, on the plan proposed you will lay us under renewed obligations. Should he go to Watertown, I shall calculate to have him leave us by the third week in May. We shall expect to hear from you on the premisses as soon as you are prepared to write. My best wishes attend you in your professional concerns and more particularly in





[1813]

the higher concerns of immortal existence to which we are pointed by the removal of our friends & acquaintances. I hope that the death of your Uncle Philo will be suitably improved to the afflicted family.

Your affectionate friend and Uncle

James Noyes

WALLINGFORD 29th Nov. 1813

Thursday P.M.

HOLBROOK CURTIS ESQ.

Watertown, Connec.

Ere this Cousin Holbrook I suspect you have given up all thoughts of hearing from me; but hope you will not infer from my silence that I am unmindful of my friend or engagements, for to the contrary I can assure you that I have made several attempts to write as often as called off is a positive fact. But have now sat down with a determination to answer your letter. "let the worse be what it will" & hope no one will come in (as family) to interrupt me; for I intend to give myself full liberty without regarding *size* & I had almost said propriety. Your letter was duely received and read with pleasure. It is quite reviving to hear from your Lordship once more; I concluded that, that young Enchantress, *your* incomparable ——— had so completely ingrossed all your attention that not one single thought was bestowed upon absent friends; & as she had made you her captive, thought the silence quite excuseable. But not one word do you say of her, but that you have been waiting all this while for me to write. A fine excuse indeed for a "College Learned Beau"! & a good look too for love! Now, Cousin H — if the truth was known, I believe it would appear that your patience was entirely exhausted, waiting for this Prodigy to make proposals of marriage, & finding her silent on the subject, thought fit to reprimand her, for delaying what you considered her indispensable duty to disclose, & in this way





[1813]

occurred the displeasure of the Lady, & swelled your own desperate state. It seems you have but just observed (in your *old* age) that custom forbids our first making advances of that kind; but as you do not adhere to fashion & approve of Lady's making proposals I have concluded to rally a considerable force of girls & send them to waylay you, so you will have an opportunity of selecting just which you please. Sarah Hawley possibly may please your fancy, I'll not pretend to obliterate those who you please, & Pray never give that as an excuse again. it will not exculpate you. You wish me, when inquired of, why you lived a life of celibacy, to say "no young Lady ever solicited your hand"? you shall be gratified, I will say "you only acknowledge the truth, my cousin was quite a diffident little fellow, & thinking it quite out of character for young Gentlemen to offer themselves, waited for some young Lady to do so until experience taught him to the contrary, & that was not till he arrived at years of superanuation & found himself too old to please the fancy of those he would select for a wife." Did you ever? how provoking! Here comes a beau with an invitation for us to attend the Ball so you see I am necessitated to leave without finishing my letter but never mind I'll resume my pen again in the morning. It is quite late & I must go to prepare for the Ball, Goodnight. Friday noon. Good Morning cousin Holbrook; what a delightful day! I have just returned from a short walk with Ann & Maria Hawley (who spent the night with us) call'd upon a friend & found sitting in her drawing room the Beaus & Belles in fine spirits playing games at Whist. I stayed long enough to have a little "dish of discourse" with them, left early to make a few calls & hastened home to chat with you.

We had a most "super excellent" Ball last eve; about 25 couple — just enough to render it pleasant. But what was a little unfortunate for us it was very dark when we came home, the rain poured down in torrents & "just by way of variety" we took half a "trip" over — however





we arrived safe at the old mansion in good health and with spirits not much depressed. It has been quite lively in Wallingford of late; we have partys almost every week, and Balls not infrequently. Dancing and card playing appear to be the favorite amusements of young people. It is but few months since card playing was introduced — but as I am quite a novice in the art cannot join with my acquaintances in their games. As it is beginning to be fashionable & others appear to derive so much pleasure from it I must acknowledge when I see them all engaged I feel inclined to attain some little knowledge; just enough to participate with my friends — but Mama says “ Sarah, I do not wish you to learn; in my opinion card playing has a bad tendency ” — and now what do you say about that, Esq? Is there any impropriety in substituting cards for Button, Crimmonal, &c. come speak candidly the sentiment of your mind & I will abide by your judgment. I know, cousin H egotism cannot be interesting to you, but when writing to my friends I say just what happens to come first, not thinking they have bounds to their patience as well as myself, but without enlarging upon the subject I’ll now turn to your letter.

I never came across so insulting an old beau as you are; then you really think by using considerable art I may possibly obtain a husband & then you think to flatter a “ little bit or so ” by saying I possess a vivid imagination &c. I beg you will say not more; for my vanity is now so inflated that it seems as though I was elevated in air and cannot tell whether I am in or out of the body. But to talk like a rational creature, I am surprised to find you ignorant of my intention to be an old maid! did you not know that I (with a number of others) expected ere long to keep old maids Hall? That is to be the case Sir! & a critique as you are, we will ever be happy to see you, and if you honor us with a visit, will exert our best endeavors to please you. I perceive by your bit would insinuate as tho’ I gave myself full liberty, in talking about your honor. To be sure

the winter of 1892-3 the weather was very dry and the ground was very hard. The water was very low and the ice was very thin. The weather was very dry and the ground was very hard. The water was very low and the ice was very thin.

The weather was very dry and the ground was very hard. The water was very low and the ice was very thin. The weather was very dry and the ground was very hard. The water was very low and the ice was very thin. The weather was very dry and the ground was very hard. The water was very low and the ice was very thin. The weather was very dry and the ground was very hard. The water was very low and the ice was very thin. The weather was very dry and the ground was very hard. The water was very low and the ice was very thin.

THE END

The weather was very dry and the ground was very hard. The water was very low and the ice was very thin. The weather was very dry and the ground was very hard. The water was very low and the ice was very thin. The weather was very dry and the ground was very hard. The water was very low and the ice was very thin. The weather was very dry and the ground was very hard. The water was very low and the ice was very thin. The weather was very dry and the ground was very hard. The water was very low and the ice was very thin.



[1814]

who would refrain from laughing when they heard our old *Steve* had fallen in love and was going to be married and must have a better command of their risibles than myself to suppress them, I am sorry however if your Lordship is discomforted and beg ten thousands of pardons. Then you are soon to be introduced to a party of Ladys at ——— ? as your heart is so very susceptible, and your disposition enterprising, I expect your first visit will terminate in matrimony. Take care dont let your heart "bump" too hard — I have not half answered your letter and here come 3 beaux, well I'll run off & they shall not tell them I am home till I have time to speak of the family. We are all well in this house, Mama is at N. Haven Uncle Philo's widow & cousin Sally were here week before last & Cornelia returned with them. I have not heard from N.Town friends of late. Do come & see us soon. I am called and must reluctantly close in great haste

Your friend & cousin

Sarah Noyes

Parents & sisters join with me in love. If you cannot read this, do tell me and I will endeavour to write more legibly next time. I have not time to look it over.

From Journal of Holbrook Curtis.

WATERTOWN, 25th of February, 1814.

It is almost a year since I came to Watertown, during which time, I have argued several causes. I have laboured under great disadvantage from timidity & its consequent embarrassment. I think I have overcome this difficulty in a measure.

The 2d day of this month an event happened to me the most afflicting I have ever witnessed. The death of my Father. Attending court at Litchfield on Wednesday the 2d inst., at o'clock I was called from my bed when I rec'd





*Holbrook Curtis*











[1814]

the disagreeable intelligence that he was dangerously ill. I rode with speed towards home & at the Bridge rec'd the more unwelcome tidings that he was dead. He expired at 8 in the evening. Peace to his shade. His kindness has heretofore freed me from care & supplied all my wants. May my respect for thy memory never stay, and if those departed are permitted to scan or influence the conduct of sublunary mortals, may mine be such that thou canst with satisfaction look on me from on high, and wilt thou, dear shade, direct, watch o'er & protect me, & may we at last join society in those ——— mansions where sorrow & terror will be known no more.

(Signed) Holbrook Curtis

My Grandfather considered a return to Newtown after his father's death in 1814 and his cousin writes to him in regard to his decision.

WALLINGFORD 11th April 1814

Monday P.M.

HOLBROOK CURTIS, ESQ.

Watertown, Conn.

DEAR COUSIN

As I was walking out a few days since, & retrospectively viewing past scenes, other objects gradually vanished; & you alone took possession of my mind. Why said I, does he not write to me? Did my letter filled with all manner of nonsense give offence? Or were his spirits so depressed that he feels no inclination to converse with the (apparently) vain & frivolous Sarah? thus, various conjectures were forming, when I arrived at the home of my friend (Miss Kirtland) & at the door was accosted by Mr. C. who held out a letter. I hastily seized it — and with no small pleasure and surprise recognized the hand of my cousin Holbrook. We are all happy to hear from





[1814]

you & that you are eligibly situated at Watertown — my Parents coincide with Aunt in thinking it better for you to remain *there*, than renounce your profession & return to New Town. Cousin Holbrook, I applaud, & admire, your filial attention & concern for your mother, but think *as it is her* desire you should continue at W.-n your duty is plain before you. After spending much time & labor in acquiring sufficient knowledge of your profession, & being well established in business I think you would enjoy yourself less well in persuing an employment of which you are unacquainted, as to continue in the practice of Law, & certainly you would not be as useful to the community, all things consider'd I think your most judicious plan will be to fix your permanent abode at Watertown. We will be very happy to see you whenever you will give us the pleasure of a visit & if you cannot come this spring, do not let the summer slide off without seeing Wallingford. My Parents have been anxious to see Aunt ever since Uncle's death, & would have been at New Town ere this, had not sickness in the family, & Pa's parochial duty's (which have been great) conspired to render it impracticable for them to leave home. The fever has & still prevails in this town, tho' at present it is abating — during the unpleasant month of March scarcely a day passed without Pa's being called to visit the sick & attend funerals — nor were his labor's confined to this Parish the opposite County of Northford, & a number of family's in Cheshire (while *their* minister was absent) sent for him to visit them in their distress. tho' he has been much exposed to the fever yet through the mercy of God it has not affected him. Undoubtedly you have heard of Maj' Hawley's death — he has left an afflicted disconsolate family. I was with them when he died & a more affecting scene I never before witnessed.

A week or two since Grandmamma was attacked with the fever — for a few days we were quite alarmed about her — she soon began to recover strength & consider'd her-





[1814]

self almost well (& rather imprudently) left her room & breakfasted & spent part of the morning with company, & since her fever has returned with alarming symptoms, which if not soon removed we fear will terminate in a quick consumption — she is now able to sit up great part of the day. Little Eunice has been quite ill for a few days but is now getting better. Pa purpose's visiting New Town this spring, if Grand-Ma gets better, Ma will accompany him, otherwise one of my sisters. Mrs. Grant, & Ann likewise talks of going but I think it doubtful whether they reach there.

On Monday last Esq Hawley deliver'd a spirited & eloquent oration, the subject of which was the defeat & downfall of Bonapart, tho' his time was not so much engrossed with the Scourge of Europe — as to leave unnoticed the situation of our own distracted country. It was written in fine stile, deliver'd with much dignity . . . . & interested all the advocates for peace while the faces of the Tyrants & Madison's friends were flushed with indignation. I would quote some of his remarks but understand it is soon to appear in print & were I to begin a rehearsal for before I could possibly stop, your patience would be wronged & my ability exhausted. Mary Ann Noyes has recently been visiting us, but before your letter arrived she had returned.

I wish you would prevail on Aunt\* & cousin Polly Ann to come to Wallingford. I think it may be of service to them to journey after the winters confinement. Grandma thanks you for your kind remembrance of *her* & wishes me to present her compliments in return. Parents Sisters & Brothers unite with me in respects & love to Aunt, Cousins, & yourself. Please remember my love to Clarissa & Maria Nichols & any who may enquire after your friend and Cousin

Sarah.

(Letter written by Sarah Noyes)

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\* "Aunt" was Esther Holbrook Curtis and Polly Ann her daughter who married Isaac Tomlinson. She was my grandfather's only sister and her daughter married Judge Chapman of Hartford.





[1814]

(Reverend James Noyes, the father of Sally and Ann Noyes, married Ann Holbrook, sister of Salmon Curtis' wife. He was descended from Rev. James Noyes of Newburyport, who when he saw seven poor old witches hanging on gibbets outside of Salem, remarked, "There be seven firebrands of Hell.")

WALLINGFORD August 29th 1814

HOLBROOK CURTIS ESQ.

Watertown

DEAR UNCLE

I received your letter on Monday, and thank you very much for your advice. You wrote, that you thought the last Edition of Morsas would be better for me, it is the last Edition of Morsas that I attend to. I study Dictionary and attend to writing. I have not Painted but very little, there is school only 4 days in a week, three weeks since Mrs. Elton left off going to school. I was homesick a little at first with the school but now I like it very much. Yesterday afternoon Mr. Elton dismissed his school, he was so unwell, and today he has not attended, I heard he was very sick. As to grammar I shall attend to that this winter.

Aunt has been very sick with the Prevailing Epidemic but has got better, there has a number of others had it in this Place and but one died. Charles and Clarissa are in Wallingford, they have today gone to Middletown with Sally. You mentioned writing Composition, there is none in the school that attended to it.

I have no news that Uncle would care about hearing, therefore I shall stop

Your affectionate niece

S Tomlinson





[1819]

Holbrook Curtis' first marriage to Elizabeth Stone Cutler is described in his journal, but was of short duration. The death of the child was quickly followed by that of the mother.

August 30th, 1819

It is more than five years since I have written in the foregoing Diary. How many and how great have been the vicissitudes of my life since that period. How true the language of the wise Man, as applied to me:

For what hath man of all his labour and  
of the venation of his heart wherein he  
hath laboured under the sun?

For all his days are sorrow and his  
travail grief. Yea, his heart taketh not  
rest in the night. This is also vanity.

The following condoles with the death of his child, and shows the point of view of that day.

WALLINGFORD August 13th 1819

HOLBROOK CURTIS ESQ.

Watertown

DEAR SIR:

We had not heard of the death of your child till yesterday, when Mr. Cutler informed us of it. We condole with you and your wife under the event. If trials are necessary for us in this state of humanity, it is equally necessary that God should determine the kind and measure of them. There is much cause for thankfulness in all our tribulation, that he designs our profit therein. Your knowledge of the scriptures, enable you (I doubt not) to have right views of him in his afflictive dispensations.

We hope that Anna will be some comfort to your dear Partner, whose situation excites our sympathy — May her





[1821]

health be restored and her life continued many years — Especially, our ardent desire is, that she may have tranquility in her soul. You will give my love & that of your Aunt to her; and tell her from us that she must “Be of good cheer, for Christ hath overcome the world.”

That trust in him, which involves confidence in his love and faithfulness, will be her support — In proportion as earthly things fail her a sense of the value of heavenly things will become a compensation worth possessing.

The vicissitudes you have met with, I think, will not fail of producing their desired effect — moderate affection towards outward objects, christian submission — That this may be the case, is the ardent wish of your

Affectionate uncle

James Noyes

### Journal of Holbrook Curtis

August 19th, 1821, Thursday

The weather is cold and dreary, on Monday the snow fell a foot deep, on a level, or more, although it is much drifted. The oldest people among us never saw such a time before, they say. The cold is freezing. The last has been a long winter, and some of the coldest weather ever known, Farenheit ranging from 10 to 20 below 0. It is now more than a year and a half since I have written in my journal, during which period I have remained single, and boarded for the most part with Mrs. Cutler, having left housekeeping Dec. 1820. I have an unproductive property consisting of a House and lands & furniture. The times are very hard for farmers, produce has never been as low before since my recollection, — Pork \$9. per hundred, Corn \$00.34 per Bushel, and Rye \$00.42 — a very difficult time for persons in Debt. I never was a financier, and I shrewdly suspect the good people of the place have shewed me pretty thoroughly since I have been in this





Town, at least, I have done considerable business, and reduced my capitol considerably besides, although my expenses have indeed been considerable. My greatest fault is indolence, and my small one, a want of Ambition. I speak of myself as belonging to the World, For in the sight of Heaven, I know I have crimes enough, in all conscience, without particularizing. I believe I might have attained some eminence in my profession, I believe I might have been respected for talents, But I lost my ambition when young, and of course my industry, — for a cause and in a Manner that I do not choose to describe on paper. I suffered in early life by reason of the Malice, Envy & Triumphant Management of those who had no other occasion to hate me than that they saw me rioting in favor and enjoyments which were denied them. I did not, like Byron's Corsair turn traitor to human Nature, and hate all — but one. On the other hand, having felt distress myself, I have ever been pierced more deeply by the woes of others.

I cannot raise my eyes to Heaven and say I forgive all Mankind. But if it be a Christian duty so to do, God grant my mind may be so much enlightened as to believe it. I cannot say that I am entirely indifferent to the favours of the World. But yet I have very little anxiety about them. The truth is my early Heartrendings taught me to distrust of all Mankind, and I much doubt if there be any other emotion of the Mind than that of selfishness in all semblance of benevolence. I have more recently, or since my residence in this place, seen much of Happiness and domestic enjoyment — and trials and woes so severe as to cast all my other sorrows into shade. I am now quite calm — happily my mind is so constituted as that the more violent emotions can make no impression on it for a long period — in succession. But sometimes my grief will steal upon my solitude and exhibit me to myself the most forlorn of Mortals. I wish I had a good wife, and as I cannot endure the Meanness, niggardliness & drudgery neces-





[1821]

sary to acquire an estate, and have a desire to read, be quiet, and enjoy domestic happiness, and wish my children well educated, if I should have any, I wish I had a rich wife. But as I seldom go abroad, have little confidence in myself, and want management, I trust I shall never have any wife at all.

Sunday, April 29th, 1821

I have been to Church through the day, heard two sermons from the Rev<sup>d</sup>. Bethel Judd. The text "Now is Christ risen from the Dead." The morning sermon was argumentation keen and perspicuous and the evidence of Christ's Resurrection was presented in a Manner so imposing as to leave no doubt on the Mind. But there was clearly a falling off in the afternoon, when the same subject was continued by way of application and improvement. On Religious subjects I am somewhat blind. Oh, that God would give me light. Within the last year, the Rev. L. McNeil Gridley, settled Presbyterian Minister of this place, has died. He was an honest, plain, candid, easy, good Man, Negligent of his affairs and died a Bankrupt. He had a considerable share of feeling. He was at times touching and quite affecting in Prayer. Since his death there seems to be a great desire to excite what is termed a Religious Awakening, and I believe it will succeed. I hope it will make people better if it does, Although I very much doubt the beneficial effects of those Religious excitements commonly denominated Awakenings. Indeed I am a sinner and selfish myself, but I see selfishness, temper, uncharitableness and a disposition to slander in those who are subjects of awakening — and pretend to a change of heart. On Tuesday I calculate, God willing, to go to Hartford, being for the first time a Member of the Legislature,—What I did not expect, as I am nominally an Episcopalian. There is a Majority of Presbyterians in this place who have always appeared to me remarkably jealous of their rights for a Majority. But I could not have been





elected without the votes of some of them, so I conclude they think it either proper or politic not to press Matters too hard. I have ever endeavoured to avoid that Religious Bigotry that leads one Man to treat another ill on account of a difference in religious sentiment. But I have felt it considerably in the course of my life — I have been improperly and unjustly treated for no other cause than that I attended Church. I have no wish to retaliate, but I wish feelings of that kind so inconsistent with the Nature of our Government & constitution were done away. It is a Relic of the Dark Ages. How do those persons who expect to go to the same Heaven calculate to enjoy perfect happiness in Company with each other when they bear one another a deadly Hatred?

*(A page of Journal torn out here)*

. . . . . for one, and I would be very well pleased to be clear of the profession, and enjoy some Dulcinia in quiet. But then the enjoyments of love in a Cottage or a desert does well for a Novel but not at all for Real Life.

Tuesday June 12 1821

Heigh Ho,— I am indolent,— lazy — I board with Mrs. Cutler, but have no convenient lodging Room. Am expecting to lodge at Smith's; Room at the office, and board in another place. If I did not dread it I would set myself to get Married — But I have not courage sufficient. How vain is life, Here am I after having once had a wife & family, the owner of a House and Real estate, far and near, like a very Slave seeking up and down the streets for a Room to sleep in. But yet I live easy, much too easy — I ought to have cares and labour.

But I am reduced to the same situation I was in Ten years ago — Oh that I were sixteen years of age, it appears to me that by labour I might accomplish great things—\* But soon I shall be too old to get a Name, and I have

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\*He was born in 1787.





[1821]

neglected it hitherto. Well it is of small importance. A Year, a Month, a day, may make us all equal. There was a fellow student with me — His education was but indifferent. But his mind was strong, and he excelled in what was droll or odd — His person was ugly — He was in his dress a perfect Sloven — And it was his delight, at that time, to sit, and while away an evening discanting on his own deformity, while every few Moments he would be interrupted by the obstreperous laughter of his fellow Students. We were then reading law — and I considered myself at that time, as possessing every advantage over H in point of education, reading, and so forth, But I looked to my own estate for a support and livelihood, and H depended on himself. I neglected my law books, read history and so forth, and neither thought or cared much for the practice of law, fame or Honour — H commenc'd business in his profession industriously and with some success, but he was too crude to become illustrious there. He had too Many distinguished, ambitious Competitors whose opportunities far surpassed his own, to ascend to the first rank in his profession — He seem'd after a short struggle to perceive the disadvantages under which he labour'd, But his Ambition was Not dampen'd. He sought and found popularity in a different field. His talents were better adapted to gain attention in a popular assembly than at the bar. He perceiv'd where his powers lay. He summon'd them all to his aid. He became a violent Partisan; his Wit & Humour, and coarse but popular eloquence soon attracted attention, and He was at a very early age promoted to the first offices in the gift of the State. He seem'd gratified by his brilliant course. He seem'd to look forward with a sure expectation that his power was permanent, and that he would soon acquire wealth. His brilliant course which resembled the path of a shooting Star was a Reproach to my indolence, and I reflected with myself that while I was in obscurity, that H with far less oppor-





tunity and advantage, had climbed to the pinnacle of fame — I knew indeed, that he had been loud on subjects that he car'd Nothing about, that he had supported a party whose principles and followers he despis'd. But yet he had attained his object, and he seem'd happy — His whole Mind and Soul were engag'd in the cause to which he Ow'd his exaltation. He had hitherto in the pursuit of popularity Neglected his property and had been Negligent of his Affairs and fortune. But he appear'd to have attain'd a fondness for the lady. She had determin'd to resist his addresses. His wealth was almost the only quality, which he possess'd, that could be acceptable to a lady — He was in his Manners cold, distant, suspicious. His disposition was Mean, contracted and avaricious, and his soul was form'd upon the most narrow scale. Her Parents as is usual in such cases but too frequently, were so blinded by the wealth of the suitor, as to perceive None of his defects — And were incessant in their importunities, that she should consent to Marry a lover who possess'd so great a portion of what appears to be thought the only thing valuable in Life. Her resistance was firm but respectful — and it is probable that the wealth of the lover and the persuasions of the Parents would have been equally unavailing had not an event hitherto unexpected occured — Fortune by one of those vicissitudes by which for the last few years, she has seemed to be benighted, swept from the Father of the lady all his estate. She could not resist longer the entreaties of Parents involv'd in distress. She was an only Child, and she yielded herself a sacrifice to the plea of doating parents. She was married to a Husband who receiv'd her with emotions very similar to those with which he would have receiv'd the avails of a good bargain in the way of Merchandize. He was pleas'd with possessing Beauty; he was gratified with having carried his point, But he was incapable of relishing any of the beauties of her Mind. His Society could not be interesting to any one.





[1821]

His sordid Soul was occupied wholly with the idea of adding to and increasing his extended possessions, and his surly Mind neither had the power or the Wish to render the domestic fireside pleasant. This fair and accomplish'd lady endeavour'd to find some consolation for the loss of domestic enjoyment in the Society of persons whose Mind and Taste resembled her own — She was receiv'd with that satisfaction which an Union of Beauty and Genius will ever find. She was admir'd & commended, and was not insensible of the admiration she receiv'd. But all these kind attentions were daggers to the Soul of the contracted & Mean Husband. Jealousy took possession of his cruel and suspicious Mind. She could Not purchase a new Ribbon but his sordid avarice would vent itself in the Most Abusive Reproaches upon the admir'd and beauteous Wife. He could Not endure that she should have any desire to please any other person than himself — and his jealousy led him to suppose that the offerings which were Made at the Shrine of her Beauty and Genius were Attacks upon his Honour. The expense of her dress, which somewhat comported with his situation, prayed upon his grovelling and avaricious Soul — I relate it as I verily believe it to be true although I know there are different opinions, and he was determin'd to relieve his feeling by a dreadful revenge on the object who had elicited his rage — she was innocent as she was Lovely, but she could Not confine herself wholly to the Society of a querulous and brutish husband — and she would sometimes endeavour to relieve the Tedium of life by accepting the invitations of the Numerous friends she had made — to a family visit — Among other friendships which she had contracted was that of a respectable Young family, who were Noted for their domestic tranquillity happiness and Hospitality. But the husband was too much provoked with all who shew'd his wife Attentions to continue any friendly intercourse with them, it became Necessary therefore that the Husband of the family where





this friendship was contracted should see the lady Home from these visits. The Rage and Jealousy of the Maddened Husband Now found an opportunity to gratify its Malice. He issued an Attachment Against the Man who had perform'd these friendly offices from the purest Motives, which cover'd all his estate. He charg'd him with the Seduction of his Wife. Astonishment was excited in the Minds of All — Wealth was Not wanting on the part of the Pff to prepare his suit — Industry and perseverance were Able to procure the testimony of a Servant Maid who had been turned off on account of Misconduct, and three or four persons in low life of dissipated habits, to circumstances which convinc'd a Jury of the Guilt of the Defendant, and of course of the Wife. Although None of them dar'd testify to the facts charg'd in the declaration, the Def. was obliged to fly his Country. The Jury gave against him a Verdict for \$5000 and an enormous bill of costs in favour of the Pff. The beautiful Wife & infant Children of the Def. were left poor and forlorn — and were oblig'd to return to a widow'd Mother in humble circumstances for subsistence. The once lovely but Now dejected and persecuted wife of the Pff. return'd to those only who would afford her protection, her unhappy parents. They had begun to lament the unhappy lot of their daughter soon after her Marriage — and their Anguish was Much quicken'd by the consideration that they had been the cause of sealing her unhappy fate. But they were Not prepar'd for so severe a trial — and in their first paroxysms of Anguish, they had nearly sunk into despair. But the example of the daughter recover'd the almost deceas'd parents. She was Mild and submissive to her cruel fate. Having found No consolation in virtue and innocence on earth — She Repos'd confidence only in that awful and dread Tribunal whose judgments are just and whose vengeance will surely overtake the Wicked. Her Parents consider'd her Abused but Not degraded — and in their Society she found that tender-





[1821]

ness due to her sufferings and her wrongs. She had been thoughtful and serious before but had never made a profession of religion. She now determin'd to give the pledge of the faith and christian character which she had for a long time by her works and conversation Maintain'd — before partaking of the Symbols of a Saviour's death, she said she desir'd to state and to confess that she had been guilty of Many and grievous Sins, which Nought but the blood of a dying Saviour could wash away — But she said that she improv'd that opportunity to declare before God and The Saviour whose death and sufferings she was about to commemorate — That she was innocent of the crime which had been imputed to her and which had spread so much unhappiness around — She said she forgave her enemies and pray'd that God Might turn their hearts — Her thoughts have Appear'd since to be plac'd exclusively on that Haven Where the Wicked cease from Troubling — and the weary find rest. Although the jealous Avaricious Husband has added to his estate and reduc'd his expenses, He is shunned by Mankind as though he were infected — And although his soul is somewhat sooth'd at beholding the distress and despair he has spread about him — yet his sordid and contracted Mind is a stranger to the composure of the persecuted object of his jealousy — He is rack'd with Madness & hate at the Neglect and contempt which he finds, while she is calm, relying on Heaven the Justifier of innocence —

Saturday November 10th 1821

Return'd on Thursday last from New York where I had been about for some time. Have been to Philadelphia, Seen the Academy of Arts, Mr. Peale's Museum, Mr. West's Pictures, The Dinner Party and so forth, have return'd and commenc'd board yesterday in my own House with Mr. Holcomb. A Hard head ache and Cold. If I were worth \$100,000 — I should be pleas'd to live in a populous Town — But, should probably be No better off in





[1821]

situation or any other respect than I now am — The most obnoxious thing in the Country to me is the low ambition, Malice & Envy which prevail there, uncultivated minds have no external or internal resources, so they examine the faults & foibles of their Neighbors — which destroys and breaks down all enjoyment and happiness — besides, there are little jealousies of ecclesiastical societies.

Saturday Dec. 1st 1821

It has snow'd for the last day and a half. For a few days past I have read Dwight's History of New England, it consists of travels and remarks as he is passing and promises to be a useful work, it has nevertheless what I esteem faults, our ancestors I do not believe possess'd all the humble, meek and christian spirit which he ascribed to them, whatever I have learnt of them from books, in tradition, or from observation on the manners and customs which they may be suppos'd to have transmitted has induc'd me to believe, that what has been so often ascrib'd to them as piety was in a great measure bigotry & asperity — that they had but a small portion of the humility, meekness and brotherly love of him whose precepts they profess to follow — for although externally they regarded some of the divine precepts in a very literal sense, yet that they persecuted & oppress'd to their utmost power all who differ'd from them in religious sentiment is an undeniable fact, and that there is a strong disposition among their descendants who retain their Puritan principles to exclude from all political power those of adverse religious sentiment or at least that such is the fact in this part of New England, must be obvious to every disinterested observer. The manners and Customs and Sentiments of our forefathers were very similar to those of the Scotch — in a manner & degree somewhat surprizing, considering that they were Englishmen. I never could account for it on any other ground than that they were Fellow Soldiers and of the same Political & religious creed in their opposi-





[1822]

tion to and destruction of Charles 1st. Certain it is that this resemblance is very strong in every variety of shade that is expos'd to view. Children designated their parents by the same names in both Countries; there was the same Canting and holy pretensions in both countries, in little Chicaneing Bargain Making—The same Religious observances of Holy days, and I have no doubt, but that our Ancestors would, with the Scotch, have deliver'd up the Unhappy Charles to his Murderers, had he sought a refuge in our Country among the first Settlers as he did in theirs from his Persecutors, provided they could have obtain'd the same reward—they would have doubtless introduced some Puritanic Maxim, or prefac'd the act with some distorted text of Scripture. But that they were bigotted, avaricious and inhuman, are facts so Notorious that a person must be blinded with all the prejudices of Dr. Dwight not to perceive it. I do not make these remarks because I suppose the first Settlers of this Country were of a character different from those of the same rank and station in other Countries at that time. Many of them brought with them all the Hypocrisy incident to the Parliamentary troops of O. Cromwell, they had been educated in a Country where Religious or Political toleration were Not then very considerably understood, and they were similar to other people of the Age in which they liv'd, but to talk of their piety & virtues is to talk of what scarcely existed in that day and generation. Dr. Dwight was a man of extensive knowledge & information and as is usual in such cases, had strong and immovable prejudices, he never saw many virtues in a political opponent, he has in his first volume given the character of many distinguish'd persons, and no doubt with great propriety, but it is believ'd that he has pass'd some no less worthy without Notice.

April 8th 1822

The County Court is in session and I somewhat expect to try a case tomorrow, but hope it will be settled. I





remain the same, board in my own house with Mr. H., and doubt whether I ever Marry. The first Monday of April inst. I was again elected a member of the Legislature. I think my enemies as well as friends will say that it was without any exertion on my part, or any attempt to influence, it is a situation I do not and have never very much coveted in this place, because I know there are a few persons here who are as destitute of anything like religious principle as they are of common honesty, who endeavour to give a Society prejudice to everthing, and although some of the P Society voted for me last Spring, yet the Cry this season is that Religion is in danger, an Episcopalian has been twice elected a member of the Gen. Assembly — Facts will evince the justice of these men — there have been 16 Elections since I have liv'd in this Town, 12 of which have been from the Presbyterian Society — But yet people who have but one eye cannot see both sides of a question, for myself I can clearly say that I do not wish to see persons elected to Office who electioneer for themselves or who endeavor to evade the provisions in the Constitution of the State for the purpose of obtaining it. I will never unless I alter my mind be in the same situation another Season as I have been the present, I will not be drawn into a Party when interested and dishonest persons from selfish Motives can give it the appearance of a religious division of sentiment. Zimmerman on religious bigotry ought to be read by certain persons in this place every morning before Prayers, it would be a blessed thing if their minds could be enlighten'd on that subject — and a great benefit to our Society. Prejudice & Bigotry of this description arise from a Narrowness of intellect, and from a want of acquaintance with human Nature. Persons of limited understanding instead of searching the true road to heaven for themselves according as it is pointed out by the divine precepts, are very liable to be occupied in presenting obstacles in the way of their Neighbours, and in consequence of judging men rather by what they have said of





[1822]

them than by observing & scanning their Conduct, are very apt to imagine and conclude that the road to Heaven is found in persecuting those of a different faith — A relic of the 14th Century—A Concomitant of Ignorance and Meanness, which disturbs the harmony of Neighbourhoods, and degrades & belittles the character of those in whom it is found.

Tuesday June 4th A D 1822

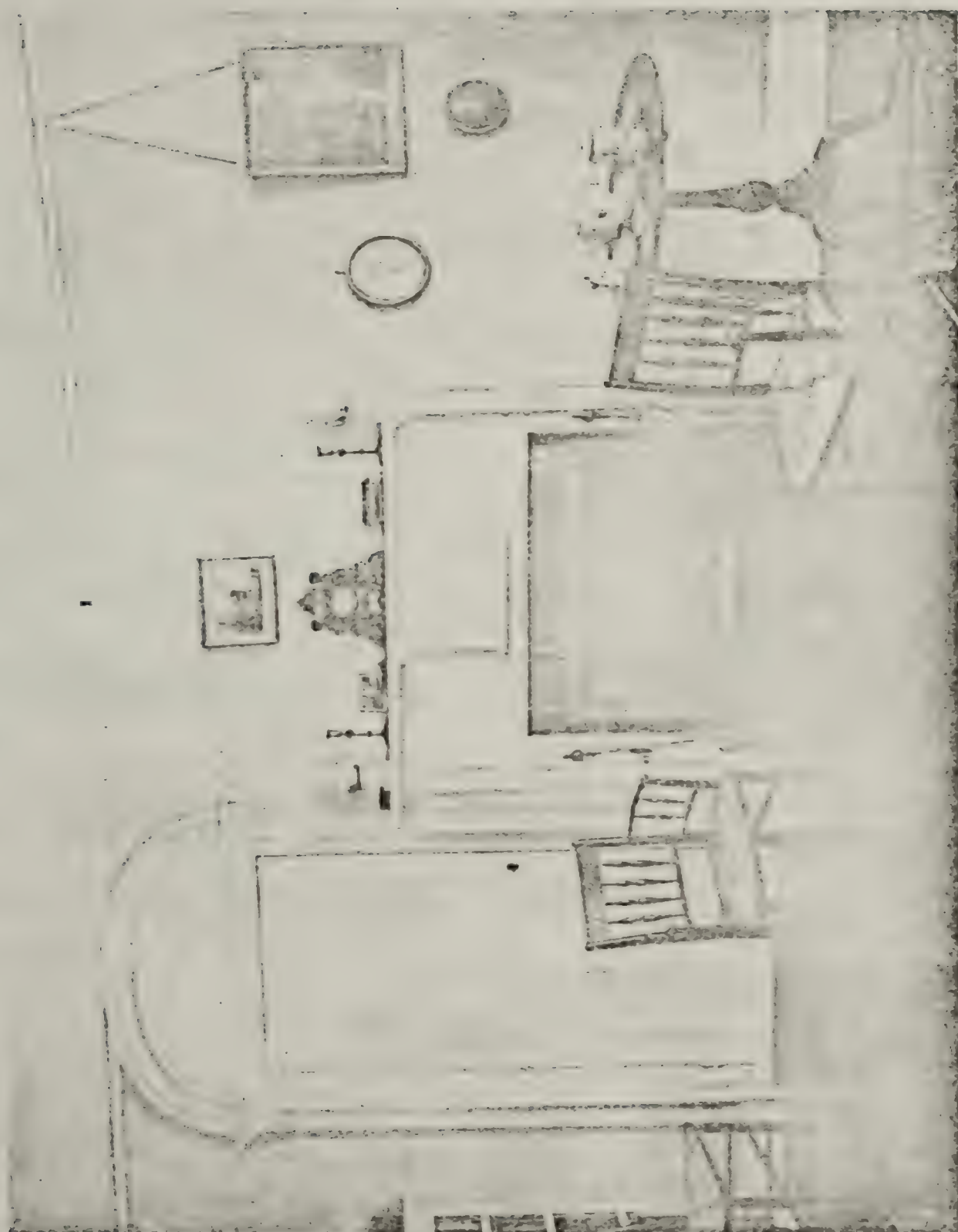
I return'd on Friday last from the Gen'l. Assembly where I had been absent four and a half weeks as a member of that body, and where I never wish again to go on the same errand. There have been two Canal Companies & two Banks incorporated. There has been a Retaliatory act pass'd Vs. the N York Steam Boat Co. which will for a time prevent the run of the Steam Boats, and a great many New Statutes. I have enjoy'd myself tolerably except that I have been harrass'd by some people at home about little petty offices, the Scum of Society is always in a ferment about its Honours. I have avoided as much as possible all Controversy of this kind. If the people want little offices who are themselves little they must apply to persons of their own stamp to procure them of which Class & description, there are enough in all conscience among us. I have felt lonely — very lonely — since my return. I cannot live in this place, if I could sell my property I would say, I would not. There is No Society here except such as possess entire different views of things from myself — I never can enjoy it. I wish to remove where I can build up a new Class of friends, form new Connections and forget some that are old — But doubt if I ever shall.

Wednesday June 5th AD 1822

Head ache — Cold — dull. I am annually expending considerable Money in making repairs about my House & place. I have now Joiners making a garden Fence, have had men at work at Stone wall. And in one way & another am constantly taking up considerable Money — I am fond











*Library at the "Maples", Watertown*





[1822]

of repairing & am Not fond of having much trouble about it myself — hence expense. I am fond of purchasing New Cloathes, and am Not fond of taking much Care of them afterward, so that my Garments are usually new, the same in quality at all times except immediately after a new purchase. The annual expense of my Wardrobe at a rough estimate I should call \$200, and yet I never dress extravagantly.

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The journal ended when Holbrook Curtis married Elizabeth Payne Edmond, 1822. It was said that after the wedding he took her on horseback to Watertown seated on a pillion behind him, dressed in a purple velvet gown with a panama "flat" on her head. My mother said the flapping of the brim gave her facial neuralgia which continued through life. My grandmother was very handsome, tall and dark with delicate features and high color. My grandfather Curtis was also tall but fair with blue eyes. Both shared a taste for reading and grandfather had a keen sense of humor, but grandmother none at all. She was carefully educated, knew Greek, Latin and French and wrote much poetry. Unfortunately they had no congenial neighbors in Watertown and her life was not a happy one. My father was born in 1823. Another boy, Henry, a year later, and about 1827 a little girl, Elizabeth Payne. These two children died and my grandmother never seemed to forget her sorrow at losing them. She cherished every letter from her father and from her relatives at Newtown, and as they explain themselves I will add them here with no other remarks until my Father begins his journal in 1840.





[1823]

NEWTOWN, June 4th 1823.

MRS. ELIZABETH CURTIS,

Watertown,

Connt.

DEAR DAUGHTER:

An opportunity offering for conveyance as I am informed, tomorrow, I improve the leisure this evening affords to inform you, that through the goodness of a kind providence we enjoy usual health. For this favor we cannot be too grateful, perhaps the recent instances of mortality among our neighbors has had some effect in impressing our minds with an idea of our continual dependence for life & Health & every blessing we enjoy. You have Doubtless heard of the fall of Colo. Shepards family, himself & wife have both been withdrawn from a troublesome world to that world where "the wicked cease from troubling & the weary are at rest." Their Daughter Miss Sophia as it is thought by many will soon follow her parents, she has a violent cough, is extremely feeble & threatened with a speedy decline. Horace does not return to College. Hungry Creditors have seized on the property. Capt. Lamson Birches wife died suddenly much in the same manner that her brother Doctr. N. Perry died. Daniel Perry died in a fit. It is reported that Abel Botsford, Esqr. is about to return to Newtown to live, his wife is in a poor state of health.

Master Robert returned to Newtown this day, he intended to have made you a visit during the Vacation, but the want of a horse and other circumstances rendered it inconvenient. William continues in his School. For myself I labor as usual, hard work with little profit; after much hesitation I concluded to have my house painted, the workman has been over it once & we are literally enveloped in oil. I shall rejoice when that business is completed. Your Ma says she has sent you a small bundle by





[1823]

Phebe & sends her love along with it. She has carried your yarn to Britain to Cousin Mollie Tulley. You have right therefore to expect it will be wove in the Course of the summer. Col<sup>o</sup> Starr's family are well, so was brother David's at Virginia a short time since. One of his sons is in College, another with a Merchant in the Country. By the time you have worried over this several hours I think you will be tired. I hasten therefore to relieve your patience by only adding my best respects to your husband and that I am, with my best wishes for the health & happiness & prosperity of you both,

Your affectionate father

William Edmond

N.B. Your Ma wishes me to remind you of your promise to make us a visit shortly, also that you will present her love to Mr. Curtis. I shall be happy to see you both whenever you can make it convenient to come. W.E.

7 o'Clock A.M.

NEWTOWN, Sepr. 18th AD. 1823.

MRS. ELIZABETH CURTIS,  
Watertown, Connt.

DEAR DAUGHTER,

When you perceive how many of the family I send as carriers of this letter, you will perhaps imagine the next load will bring us all on your hands, you need not however be alarmed for my old complaint the rheumatism or cramp or whatever it may be called & your Ma's infirmities with which you are acquainted, will operate as a bar, as your husband being a lawyer might call it, for the present, however ardent our wishes may be to see you both in your own habitation. I have not yet had *leisure* to read many of the books Mr. Curtis was so kind as to send me & for the same





[1823]

reason I chuse rather to ascribe it to *that* rather than to *indolence* or *inattention* or want of *gratitude* that I have not before acknowledged the favour under hand & seal, I shall not & would not if I had time this morning attempt to amuse you with the passing events of the day in Newtown. Sarah &c can tell & will be pleased to tell you *all they know* which undoubtedly is much more than has come to my knowledge. Accept this as a simple token of remembrance, and an assurance that however negligent I may be in little attentions, or even the ordinary civilities of life both yourself & Mr. Curtis have my increasing prayers for your peace, health, prosperity and happiness both here & hereafter. Thank Mr. Curtis for the letter he sent me, it gave me much pleasure & believe me, every appearance to the contrary, notwithstanding, yours & his with esteem, affection.

William Edmond

NEWTOWN, October 11, 1823.  
12 o'clock

MR. HOLBROOK CURTIS,  
Watertown,  
Connt.

per favor of Mr. Peck

DEAR SIR:

Your favor of the 30th announcing the birth of a son attended with such favourable circumstances, relieved us not only from a degree of solicitude we could not fail to feel, but afforded a pleasure to our family not easy to express. Permit us to congratulate yourself and Elizabeth on the occasion. That the child may enjoy health, increase in stature, live long & prove a blessing to his Parents, his friends & society is our unanimous wish. I can discover nothing in your letter to discourage the hope that this wish





[1823]

may one day be realized unless indeed it is the intimation of the Physician that the child's countenance has a resemblance to his Grandfather's, but whatever his looks may indicate I hope he is born to a better fortune. Give her Ma's & my love to Elizabeth & tell her in our opinion her obligation to be prudent in respect to her health has become more imperative than ever & we hope she will not lose sight of it for a moment. with best wishes for the health & happiness of your whole family I remain, Sir, affectionately yours,

William Edmond

P. S. Tell Eliz<sup>h</sup> Sunday was my birthday Aet. 68.

NEWTOWN, October 22d A. D. 1823.

HOLBROOK CURTIS, ESQR.

WATERTOWN,

CONNT.

DEAR SIR:

Your favor of the 21st instant came to hand this afternoon and verified my apprehension, that the continuance of Elizabeth's illness was the reason why her Ma did not return last week, we had flattered ourselves however that she might be so far recovered as to permit of her return this day, but Providence it seems for wise purposes no doubt has ordered it otherwise. If to pity Elizabeth under her affliction would alleviate her pain or shorten the period of its duration, she might confidently hope for speedy relief. But as it can do neither we are at a loss what consolation to offer. I could tell her indeed that time & patience & prudence will sometimes almost work miracles, and add a number of other trite observations, but I know from experience how insignificant they appear to a person in actual distress. If her fever is only the result of the inflammation you mention, it will subside very soon when the





[1824]

crisis to which her complaint must necessarily come is past. I am glad her Mother is with her & to hear that she with yourself enjoys health. Mrs. E. need give herself no uneasiness on account of affairs at home, while her assistance is useful & needed where she is, we all enjoy usual health. Col<sup>o</sup>. Starr was here this afternoon, his family are well, he will speak to Mr. Knox tomorrow to carry Robert with him to N. Haven on Friday. We shall have him equipped and ready by that time. Ann sends her love to all. Consider this if you please a hasty family letter and be assured of my best wishes for yourself, Elizabeth & Son together with Mrs. E.

William Edmond.

NEWTOWN, Jan<sup>y</sup> 8th 1824.

MRS. ELIZABETH CURTIS,

WATERTOWN,

CONNT.

DEAR DAUGHTER,

I expect William P. Edmond will be the bearer of this who can inform you whatever you may consider interesting in respect to us all, shall therefore omit any description of that state of health &c which under the care of a kind providence we enjoy. Your letter to Ann M. was the only information in respect to the health of yourself & family to be relied on which we had received in four or five weeks & came with additional pleasure as it was evidence of your convalescence under your own hand. The increase of my name sake in weight shows that he endeavours to alleviate his misfortune in being deprived of the natural resources of gentlemen of his age, by a proper devotion to his bottle, to a devotion of that sort I have no serious objection provided his affection for the bottle is restricted to the milk it may contain. I forward Mr. Cur-





[1825]

tis' Books, thank him for the use &c. am stopped this moment by the arrival of the mail & cut short in my intention of filling a page. Love to Mr. Curtis & friends,

Yours affectionately

Wm. Edmond.

My Grandmother's second son, Henry H. Curtis was born October 18th, 1824; died at the age of twelve, August 21st, 1836. My brother Dr. Holbrook Curtis was named both for him and for my Grandfather.

NEWTOWN, October 12th A. D. 1825.

HOLBROOK CURTIS, ESQR.

WATERTOWN,

CONNT.

DEAR SIR:

The report you rec<sup>d</sup> of my misfortune is not entirely groundless, bringing a saddle downstairs my foot slipped, a severe fall followed, this happened the 29th of Septr. ult. — since that time I have been exercised with constant pain & spasms in my right knee & thigh and am not without serious apprehension myself that the neck near the head of the thigh bone is fractured, this opinion seems strengthened by the fact that after a lapse of fourteen days I cannot bend so as to sit upright in the bed and at this moment am lying at full length on my back while attempting to write. Doctors Lacy, Judson & Booth however incline to the opinion that the bone is not broken. I regret that you or Elizabeth should have experienced any uneasiness on my account, it can alleviate none of my pains. Your own have been sufficient. That Henry is recovering affords me much pleasure. I intended by this time to have been at your house & witness for myself the improvement of the children. It was otherwise ordered & it only remains for me to sub-





[1825]

mit. As to my bank stock I know nothing but by report \$2000 would be a heavy loss to me where my whole estate amounts to so little. I have not however idolized property so much as to suffer the subject to trouble to any great extent. In fact I consider my own troubles as comparatively light. The Angel of destruction is abroad among us, enters almost every House and Death drags his victims from almost every Door in our neighborhood as the following melancholy list will evince to which many other names might be added.

*Deaths*

Capt. Austin Booth

Anne, wife of Dan Baldwin

Dan<sup>l</sup> Baldwin

A Student at Judge Blackmans

Booth Glovers oldest child

Herman Warner's child

Nath<sup>l</sup> Mallery at the old Church

Birdsey Glover

Elijah, son of Widow D. Nichols

Austin Beers, &c.

Miss Anna daughter of Caleb Baldwin

supposed cannot continue.

Booth Glover, his case considered desperate.

I do not pretend to enumerate all the sick.

Mrs. Edmond & myself think it would be presumptuous for you or Mrs. Curtis to think of coming to Newtown at present & beg you will be contented at home until the sickness subsides — with sentiments of respect & esteem yours

William Edmond

Mrs. E. desires to be remembered to you all.





[1825]

NEWTOWN October 25th 1825.

MRS. ELIZABETH CURTIS

WATERTOWN

Ct.

Care Holbrook Curtis Esq.

DEAR SISTER. I have thought it my duty to write you a few lines from which you will learn that my father's health is no better than when he wrote. From his cheerfulness soon after his unfortunate accident we were led to believe that its consequences might not prove as serious as he at first apprehended. The irksomeness of confinement together with the excruciating pain he has undergone have (in my opinion at least) materially affected not only his spirits but his health. I would not have you suppose however that we consider him in immediate danger. My father & Mother thought it was best not to write to you this morning fearing that you might be too much alarmed but I have ventured to do it without their knowledge. The fever which has prevailed here this summer has somewhat abated. The last deaths were B . . n & Squire Dibbly.

Remember me to Mr. Curtis & assure him that his kindness to me last Summer will never be forgotten.

By your Brother

Wm P. Edmond

We should be happy to hear from you, How do your children do? Kiss the little urchins for me.

NEWTOWN, Decr. 1st 1825.

DEAR SIR:

I have been hesitating this half hour, whether to attempt writing at all. The reason is I have little if anything for the subject of a letter except my poor self and am sure a relation of my sufferings whatever they may be can afford no pleasure to my friends, let me tell you then as





[1826]

briefly as may be that although the covering to my bones is considerably wasted I think myself better than when you were here, my spasms tho violent are less constant. I can get out of bed with help & sit while it is making, my appetite is good & I enjoy more sleep. add to this although this is the Sixty-second day my patience is not entirely exhausted. This is the bright side of the picture, the reverse you will readily conjecture, when I tell you I cannot sit upright in the bed, have command of the lame leg only by applying the hands of myself or another without the least aid from the muscles or tendons — my family are as usual making the necessary allowance for the additional fatigue and trouble my infirmities cannot fail to occasion. We heard with pleasure how you all did by Mrs. C. Chapman & yesterday by the post, the improvement of Master Henry gives, as it must yourself & Elizabeth, much pleasure. I did not expect to hear of his pedestrian feats so soon. William we know has long been a peripatitic & we hope he will soon become a philosopher. I stop here as the mail has past while I have been scribbling.

January 2d A. D. 1826.

HOLBROOK CURTIS, Esqr.

WATERTOWN,

CONNECT.

DEAR DAUGHTER:

I should have acknowledged the rec<sup>t</sup> of your last which afforded us much pleasure, but did not receive it until eleven o'clock in the evening & was forced to await an answer for the commencement of another year, a year that we sincerely hope will, as well as many years yet to come, be productive of much happiness to yourself, Mr. Curtis and the little ones. I think you will be reconciled to your disappointment in not sooner receiving an answer when you perceive how barren the present is of anything calcu-





[1826]

lated to inform the understanding, amuse the fancy, or improve the heart. I might plead as an apology for not doing better my situation which has varied very little from what it was when you were here, but I have another directly to the purpose which I think irresistible. The winter of age. The prime of life has its trials, often severe, but there generally is something to lighten the burden, to operate as an offset a rational hope that a little time may bring happier days & brighter prospects. Not so with old age! I speak merely with respect to the enjoyments of the present life — just look at an old man — it is worth while. I hope you will see many years & when old age arrives I could not have you taken by surprise with feeble & tottering steps (if he can step at all) for music he has no ear — for beauty he has no eye, for food, no relish — your imagination will readily fill up the portrait & when finished add perhaps — here indeed is the shadow, but where is the substance? Here is the garrulity of age but where is the “unbounded mind” that once inhabited this frail tenement. To this dull gloomy page I ought perhaps to add “This world a dream accomplished”, &c.

January 3d 1826.

Thanksgiving day here passed by without any remarkable occurrence. There was an illumination of the Church on Christmas as usual, how far the audience were enlightened is not for me to say!

Connecticut Thanksgiving came in the month of January.

Between 1826 and the next letter of 1833 my grandmother lost her little girl and also her brother, William Payne Edmond, and there were various letters of condolence. She was taken up with the education of the boys and went away very little. My grandfather was frequently at Court and in the legislature at Hartford.





[1833]

This poem was written when she was feeling her loss and has all the characteristics of American verses of that day —

Counsels.

Though bright thy morn of life may seem  
Remember clouds may rise;  
And trust not to the transient gleam  
Of calm and smiling skies.  
So tread life's path in sunshine drest,  
With lowly cautious fear;  
That when griefs shadows o'er it rest,  
Its memory may be dear.  
If dark life's matin hours may be  
Despond not at their gloom;  
Joy's cloudless sun may rise for thee  
And hope's bright flowers bloom.  
So trace thy pathway thorn bestrewed,  
That thou in happier hours,  
With pure and pangless gratitude  
May'st bless its fragrant flowers.  
Through clouds and sunshine flower and thorn  
Pursue thy even way,  
Nor let thy better hopes be born  
Of things that must decay.  
Rejoice with trembling, mourn with hope  
Take life as life is given;  
Its rough ascent, its flowery slope,  
May lead alike to Heaven.

Elizabeth Curtis,  
1830.

NEWTOWN, July 5th 1833.

MRS. ELIZABETH CURTIS,  
WATERTOWN.

DEAR ELIZABETH:

I avail myself of an opportunity by Mr. Chester Dutton to say your mother's health is apparently much the same





[1833]

as when you were here. It has varied from time to time with changes of the weather, with colds, &c. but seems after all to assume no fixed character of debilitation or amendment, her debility continues, and the swelling of the limbs, tho somewhat abated. After Mr. Curtis had returned from Hartford & had arranged his business she flattered herself that you would make us a visit & often expresses her wish to see you & it would be pleasing to us all if you would make us a visit without a sacrifice of business & convenience.

Enclosed is a sample of bombazine. Your Mother purchased a yard like it at Watertown, another yard is wanting similar to the sample, we have nothing in our stores here, that will compare. If you have anything at your Watertown stores that will match by obtaining & forwarding one yard of it by Mr. Fenn you will confer a favour on your sister. Robert was well on 15th June, his business increasing. You will perceive by what is written the difficulty with which I write, was it not for this I might send you a long talk on the doings here of yesterday & today by way of celebrating not the 4th of July, but a great personage now on his tour of observation called & known by the name of And<sup>r</sup> Jackson. (*sarcasm*) Doctr. Booth's family are well. My respects to Mr. Curtis & Children.

Yours affectionately

William Edmond

(From Dr. Robert Edmond, Mrs. Holbrook Curtis' brother.)

NEW LOTS December 3rd 1833.

MR. HOLBROOK CURTIS

WATERTOWN, CONNECTICUT.

MY DEAR SIR

Your favor of the 23 ultimo arrived last evening after a detention of some days in the office, occasioned by not





[1833]

having visited Brooklyn for sometime past. Immediately after your departure we commenced our journey, and reached Bedford early in the evening, a large party had assembled at Judge Jays to welcome us, among whom were a few acquaintances of my Father. After partaking of a supper which would have satisfied the most fastidious epicure, and spending the night, we proceeded to Greenwich and the following morning took the Steamboat at Sawpits for New York where we arrived at four O'clock, and in one hour more reached home in safety, when I ascertained that the calls for Professional Services had been extremely limited during my absence.

Bucephalus bore the jaunt better than I had anticipated I was induced to take the Boat, fearful that his appearance might cause some one else to reprove me although he could not. Immediately after our return Mary visited New York to obtain Elizabeth's bonnet, not finding one ready made to suit her fancy, we were obliged to wait some days. More than a fortnight has now elapsed since I forwarded it by the Steamboat West Chester commanded by Capt Brooks, addressed to Father at Newtown at the same time I forwarded a line by mail to him relative to it. I have not received at the present time any answer. I called at Mr Armitages ten days ago but did not see Elizabeth (*Elizabeth Armitage, his niece*). I intend visiting New York tomorrow and shall call to see her. Elizabeth will find a note from Mary in the Band box upon its arrival. if it has not arrived at the receipt of this, please write again and I will see Capt. Brooks on the subject.

Fortunes continue to be made in land speculation, the purchaser of Parmentiers garden has realized twenty thousand dollars from his purchase, by dividing it into lots, some estates which ten years since would not command a ten thousand are now worth — fifty thousand dollars.

The past month as in former years has afforded much leisure and has been spent in reading, writing and in ar-





[1833]

ranging matters for the winter. As Mary intends writing a few lines I will not trespass any farther. Please remember me to Elizabeth, William, Henry and believe me yours with affection

R Edmond

Dec 3d 1833.

MY DEAR SISTER,

I was exceedingly disappointed, and sorry to learn, through Mr. Curtis' letter to the Doctor, that the Bandbox containing your Hat, had not been received and hope you have not attributed it to any negligence on my part. I know from experience how difficult it is to get anything in the Country, and therefore ordered one to be made soon.

I have been much occupied since I left you, in making preparations for the Winter, as making Carpets, Valens, spread, sheets, pillow-cases &c.—our room is a front one, on the first story, and is now neatly, and comfortably furnished, and assumes quite a respectable appearance, for you must know, that we call it a Bedroom, or a Parlour, whichever we fancy or both united in one.

I have received but a *few* visits, or rather calls, since my abode here — the New Lots people I understand, are not particularly sociable — the remark which you made in reference to sociability in your neighborhood is applicable to this — my time, and attention, however, have been so fully employed, and the Dr. so agreeable, that I do not in the least feel the want of society. It would give me great pleasure to receive a letter from you & learn how you all do, with my kind remembrances, to Mr. Curtis, I remain your affectionate Sister,

Mary L Edmond.





[1835]

NEWTOWN May 27th 1835.

HOLBROOK CURTIS, ESQR.

WATERTOWN

DEAR SIR:

In reply to your favor of yesterday announcing the state of health in your family & We also, have not been without our share of complaints, none however, that amounted to actual confinement for any considerable length of time. Ann has suffered the most of any of us & is still rather confined. When Robert was last at home he gave encouragement of seeing us together with Mary & Child if convenient by the first of May. We of course have expected them daily for four weeks past, but have heard nothing from them by letter or otherwise and are entirely at a loss how to account for our disappointment. We should be pleased to have you take Newtown either going or returning or both in the way of your contemplated tour to Brooklyn and hope the journey may be prosperous & satisfactory to the health of you all. I have presented your request in respect to Aunt Phebe's estate to Doctor Booth & in your behalf requested his early attention to the subject.

That the Legislature should be solicitous to create vacancies is to me no way surprising. To create vacancies & fill offices with party sycophants seems to be the rule of action from the usurper in the Presidential chair downward to every class of his minions, cloathed with a little brief authority. "When the political pot boils and the scum rises to the top" then may it be truly said "when vice prevails and impious bear sway the post of honor is a private station."\*

The simple admission & discussion of Wightmans resolution to instruct our Senator, in congress to erase their own records is in my opinion a gross insult to their under-

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\* President Jackson's administration.





[1840]

standing, a base & grovelling submission to the will of a despot & a sacrifice, as far as it goes of the most valuable trait in the Constitution, the independence of that Senate which is the short Anchor of safety to the Small States. Should the resolution be adopted Connecticut will then have set her seal to the last grade of degradation.

Give my love to Elizabeth & sons

Yours &c.

Wm. Edmond.

There were letters from Judge Edmond until a few days before his death in 1838. Through age and infirmity his life had narrowed down and although he retained a clear judgment and interest in public affairs, they seem very much alike. William Edmond Curtis was from now on the chief interest in the lives of Holbrook and Elizabeth Curtis.

My father kept all of the letters which he received while at school in Cheshire, and one from my grandfather explained why he broke away from Yale and sent him to Trinity, then Washington College. He thought that in a small institution he would have more intercourse with the faculty and that as his cousin, Mrs. Chapman, lived in Hartford, she would be able to look after him if he were sick. The journal now begins which covers the years from 1840 to 1880.

## JOURNAL OF WILLIAM EDMOND CURTIS.

### *Part I.*

Washington (Trinity) College  
Hartford —

1840.  
Second Term.  
Freshman Year.

Jan. 3rd. Friday. With the beginning of the New Year, I begin the second term of my college life, wishing to keep watch of Old Time in his flight and at some





[1840]

future period to review the past course of my life. I commence a labor which I trust to persevere in. Yesterday in the severe cold, thermometer below 0, I left home and rode 30 miles to Hartford in the stage. During the journey felt quite sick. Today I recommence my studies, taking up Horace, Algebra and Greek majora. . . . .

Sat. We have had a holyday. Have read some old newspapers but for the most part have trifled away the day. I have resolved that in future I will remain more in my room, devote more attention to my studies and overcome my so great fondness for the society of fellow students which encroaches too much on the time I ought to devote to my own improvement. Some feuds that existed during the last term I hope are ended through the old motto "forgive and forget."

Jan. 5th. Sunday. Read 40 pages in Wayland's Political Economy. In the afternoon attended divine worship in the College Chapel, heard an excellent sermon from the Rev. Dr. Totten. The weather though moderated today, for the last 4 days has been colder than it has been known to be for many years. . . .

Mon. Been through the regular routine of college duties very satisfactorily to myself. Have besides the regular course of studies begun Homer's Illiad of which I have read 25 lines, not much hope of reading the 24 books, but will try.

Tues. Passed the day as usual as to college duties. Called in at Mrs. Hopkins a short time.

Wed. Rose in the morning with the headache, a prevailing epidemic especially in study hours which I think Trumbull calls "the student's sweet relief and excuse for many a non paravi." I have never experienced the former or made use of the latter, of these two redeeming qualities. I have, notwithstanding, which word by the by is rather a long one, jogged on very comfortably. I find the scanning of Horace scandalous. This is rather a poor pun,





[1840]

but I think it is excusable since I never made one before, although on reflection I expect to find it borrowed. Went a skating today, drew a line with my body parallel to the ice, think it is about time to leave off writing as well as skating.

Thursday. No remarkable incidents have occurred. Spent most of the evening down in the city loafing around, went to the Whig reading room, pondered on the benevolence of the kind folk who fitted it up for the accommodation of the loafers and boys I found there. I then walked over to the Democrats one where I found no newspapers since they would be of little use to the party. The room was full of paintings which I suppose were intended to convey those ideas which they could not derive from the invention of Cadmus. . . .

Friday. Read some, studied ditto, worst of all sprained my left wrist severely by a fall or rather by push down whilst skating.

Sat. It has been one of those leisure days in which we have the most to do. The forenoon was consumed in the Society. The afternoon in "pottering" according to the phraseology of the beautiful Miss Kemble. During the afternoon one of those occurrences took place which often happens in college life. A new student by the name of Ogden has just now entered the partial course, he is what is called a green horn although a very sensible fellow yet is so honest and has seen so little of the world\* that he fully believes everything that is told him. And there are always some persons in college who will take advantage of these things to play off tricks, he has been smoked this afternoon, that is ten or fifteen fellows have been in ever since dinner smoking him and firing off quibs.

Sun. Jan. 12th. Attended Church in the college chapel in the afternoon. Heard Doc. Totten preach, have both read and wrote some today.

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\*Aug. 1, 1842. Ogden says he did not believe one word on my reading this to him today. He graduates at this time. W. E. C.





[1840]

Mon. Passed the day in studying and reading Homer's Illiad and the New World.

Tues. Read thirty lines in Homer and attended to other things.

Wed. I am suffering from severe cold, the variety of which does not tend much to do away with the monotony of college life. Yea, verily variety is the spice of life.

Thurs. The weather, that interesting theme in conversation when all other things fail, is very cold. Snow on the ground. I am experiencing all the horrors of cold weather and fretting about it in a warm room. We have just heard of the loss of the steamboat Lexington by fire on last Monday evening in a snow storm near the Long Island shore directly opposite Bridgeport. Reports say that 200 passengers were destroyed, 2 men on a piece of the wreck together with an old Sea Captain who was on board who escaped on a cotton bale, are all whose lives are saved. This accident creates a great sensation in the city.

Fri. This day has passed as almost every day in College. I will describe it. I wake up in the morning. Hear chum bustling about the room and then the first bell for prayers begin to jingle, up I jump, on with clothes, wash, comb hair, grab cloak, hat, book, and then set off for the chapel full gallop. Arrive and take my seat the moment the last bell ceases tolling, always punctual. After prayers we go to recitation, and then to breakfast. At 9 o'clock the study bell rings, at 11 o'clock comes recitation, then dinner. Now we have till 1 1/2 o'clock to loaf in at leisure, then another study bell, then recitation at 3 1/2 o'clock, after that prayers, then supper. There is now two hours to go down into the city, etc. Then comes another study bell at 7 o'clock, study till I have the lesson and now I am writing this at 8 o'clock, and soon shall adjourn to bed. . . .

Sat. In the forenoon I attended the Society meeting.





[1840]

We had an excellent debate by Guion and Wetmore vs. Tracy and Beers, concerning the public character of Aaron Burr. In the afternoon read one volume of Lady Bulwer's novel Chevely or the Man of Honor. Passed the evening at Mrs. Chapman's.

Sun. Jan. 19. I have read the last volume of Chevely. In the forenoon staid at home, in the afternoon attended divine worship at the college chapel, heard tutor Williams preach. (Bishop Williams).

Mon. In spite of all my resolves at the commencement of the term I find that I am growing quite negligent. For three or four days I have not read any Homer and have neglected my journal. I have been so much engaged in reading the autobiography of Baron Trench that I have devoted all of today to it.

Tues. I am getting better of my cold, have been skating on the river, commenced taking the daily Courant. I think Baron Trench exhibits egotism in the manner in which he represents himself and his motives whilst he throws a dark shade over those parts of his life which are deserving reprehension. But all men who write their own history do this and who would not?

Wed. Snowed all day. John Marshall of Virginia expelled from our Society the Atheneum, he first sent his resignation, it was rejected and charges made against him of violating those promises he had made on entering the society and insulting it. The counsel convicted and expelled him.

Sat. Attended Society meeting in the morning, made appointment for Exhibition. Spent most of the afternoon in preparing Catalogues to send off per mail. In the evening went to Mrs. Chapman's with Sanford. There was an alarm of fire about 1/2 past 9 o'clock.

Sun. Jan. 26th. In the morning went to the Episcopal, heard a sermon from Mr. Lee of Springfield, a man possessed of powerful lungs and able to bawl the loudest of





[1840]

any person I ever heard, in the afternoon listened to a discourse from Pres. Totten, the commencement of a series of lectures upon the decalogue.

Wed. Studied, besides regular lesson read 30 lines in the Illiad, in the evening attended the Institute lecture by Washburn of Springfield. On the influence which the discovery of the passage round Cape of Good Hope to India had upon the commerce of Europe, to this cause, he attributed the fall of the Republics of Venice and Genoa.

Thurs. Fog! fog! I have not seen the sun for three days, the deep snow is fast disappearing. We had speaking in the chapel this night, it having been deferred from last night on account of some dirty fellows burning pepper on the stove which caused every person in the room to cough violently, and the noise was so great that not a word of the prayers could be heard.

Sun. Feb. 2. In the forenoon attended Church, in the afternoon heard a sermon on the first commandment. It is Communion day, the person who placed pepper on the stove and is guilty of other open immoral conduct partook of the Communion, but this is not as bad as the conduct of some who are deceiving hypocrites, and under the cloak of religion obtain their education and practice such immorality as ought to ostracise a man from the pale of decent society. I have not time to make a review of the week, so good night.

Tues. Spent the day in studying and reading, passed the evening at Mrs. Chapman's.

Tues. Nothing to vary the monotony of regular exercises through the day but speaking in the Chapel. This evening I heard a very interesting lecture from Mr. Burgess on the affinity of nations and language. He said that the blood of the north of Europe was one common stock, the most enlightened nations on the globe as well as many other things too numerous to mention.

Feb. 11. Sun. I have become sadly neglectful of my





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poor journal. The days which until now I have neglected to mention have passed in much the same manner as usual.

This morning I heard a sermon from Mr. Croswell of Boston. In the afternoon I heard Pres. Totten preach on the fourth commandment. We had yesterday a pleasant meeting of the Society. I took part in the exercises by reading composition and debating, the evening I passed at Mrs. C. During the week I have read 150 lines in Homer besides the regular studies. On Friday evening I went to the Democratic caucus.

Mon. Took a very pleasant walk on the railroad, weather mild and pleasant.

Tues. It is one of those wet, foggy, moggy days that assist in removing the snow which has remained from the 15th of December en masse upon the earth to the present time. I am engaged in preparing an anonymous paper for the Society called Gentleman's Magasine, which calls away my attention from the journal. No incidents have occurred today worthy of notice except at breakfast in the morning a person remarkable for thickness of skull only, thought proper to take up some words said in jest as said in earnest and to the amusement of all flew into a passion and talked very bravely about thrashing me, but at the case in hand, the bully showed himself a coward.

Wed. Thurs. Fri. have flown, and not one word in my little journal. Let them go down to oblivion, not a sentence to their memory. I have finished and half reviewed the first Book of the Illiad in addition to my other studies. Perhaps at a future period looking over this page I shall ask what was then uppermost in my mind, at this time there is no one thing in particular, but a desire to progress in my studies with a mixture of politics and the deuce knows what. . . .

Thurs. Feb. 27th. One week has passed and not a word in my diary. All the good resolutions I made not to let a day pass without writing in it have been broken. The





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time I have neglected to record contains nothing of variety in college life. But the whole town has been in a bustle for the last two days on account of a great young men's Whig meeting or rather convention yesterday. About 600 procured a steamboat and came up the river which has just broken up. 1200 came up in the cars from New Haven and the adjoining towns. Great enthusiasm was manifested among the various delegations. Unity, good order, and harmony, characterized all the proceedings of the convention and every delegate returned to his house well satisfied with the reward he received for his trouble in coming many miles through the mud and snow. 5 persons walked 35 miles of their journey being unable on account of the state of the roads to come in any other manner. I attended the evening session at the city hall, hundreds were present and the room was crowded to suffocation. Among the speakers was Mr. Reynolds of New York and Hagens of New Haven with whom I was much pleased. When a large crowd was assembled at the depot and the cars expected in with the New Haven delegates a flag appeared on the tower of the college chapel, it was cheered by the students. The President finding the cause of the cheering ascended the tower and removed the flag amidst a universal groan. This incident shows that truth is oftener to be found in the halls of learning than in the dark places of ignorance. Last night I retired late and obtained but half an hour's sleep before called up by the chapel bell so here goes obedience to Morpheus! ! !

Friday. Sat. We had a pleasant meeting of the Society. In the afternoon an attempt was made to raise a balloon by Bond and Mackelroy, it proved a failure owing to a strong wind and want of skill in sending it up.

Sun. Feb. 30. Another month has passed away. I have not let it do so unprofitably. I have attended to my regular studies and in addition to those read one book of the Illiad and part of another. I have fulfilled all my Society duties





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and written three numbers of an anonymous paper to be read in Society called the Gents. Magasine. Today I have not attended Church but have remained in my room.

Monday. Tuesday evening walked down to North Glastenbury.

Wed. In the morning walked down the river 4 miles to church, after dinner went to the cotton mills, then returned to Hartford, rode part of the way, called on the Miss Smiths, was much pleased with them, at Glastenbury. Ash Wed.

April 24, 1840. The exhibition proved satisfactory to ourselves and the public. The feelings of fear and embarrassment in my own mind were quickly dissipated by despair, and after I had fairly commenced speaking my piece I felt perfectly composed. After the exercises the musicians and appointees partook of some refreshment. A few bottles of old Madeira were drunk, the remainder was brought up to the college. A few of us were seated in the room where they were placed, noise was made and Prof. Stewart had the impertinence to dismiss us to our rooms and report the case to our parents through the faculty. Thus ends a college scrape.

Nov. 17th. 1840. Last night I attended the introductory lecture of the Young Men's Institute. It was delivered by the Hon. John Q. Adams. The subject was faith. He first mentioned the celebrated account of Plutarch concerning Alexander and his confidence in his physician. He then quoted an extract from the works of Jean Jacques Rousseau describing the character of this man as being a component of crimes and a gigantic intellect. The quotation was where Rousseau, speaking of instructing children in history, mentions the conclusion drawn by a child from this anecdote concerning Alexander, that his intrepidity in taking a nauseous draught was the occasion of the admiration excited by the conduct of the Macedonian hero. Rousseau then mentioned his own





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opinion,—That Alexander's respect for virtue was to be admired. This, said Adams is my own opinion. He mentioned the anecdote as an instance of faith. He then compared this instance with that of Abraham's in the sacrifice of Isaac. The latter portion of his discourse resembled a sermon. His personal appearance was by no means remarkable except a large head. His voice was small, musical and very distinct, not a word was lost, slow in utterance, quick, not violent in his gestures, he used clear perspicuous language embellished with some splendid similes, his voice cracked when much elevated. Thus much for the ex-President of the United States.

Dec. 13th. Tues. Eve. I listened to the introductory lecture of the Young Men's Institute. It was delivered by Mr. Geo. Bancroft, the celebrated historian. The subject was "the progress of history as connected with the progress of humanity." The lecture was good but rather too loose and unconnected. The style florid and many beautiful figures. I came this evening near being chosen President of the Mss. Association. I should have if one of the members had not prevented it by urging the objection "that I was not a member of the church." Last Saturday I was appointed Chairman of the Committee of Arrangements for the ensuing Exhibition at the Atheneum.

Thurs. Dec. 29.  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 11 o'clock. Just returned from a party at the Hon. Isaac Toucy's. An old friend of my parents. Was introduced to Mrs. Sigourney, conversed some five minutes with this celebrated poetess.

—Part Omitted—

Wednesday. December 1st. 1841. The first day of winter was never ushered in with weather more apropos. Last evening I attended a lecture delivered by Elihu Burritt, usually known by the name of the learned Blacksmith. He labored to prove the non existence of genius. The





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lecture showed a strong mind possessed of a vivid conception and keen observation, while the florid style and confused figures betrayed an ignorance of rhetoric.

## New Chapter.

1842.

### Junior Year.

January 3rd. Two years ago today I commenced this journal. What changes have come over the face of all things as well as myself. The college itself has altered. H. S. Sanford who commenced a journal at the same time with myself left the Institution first term sophomore year. He has now just returned from Spain where he has been for his health. Vacation is almost gone. I am eighteen years of age! It is necessary that I establish now the character which I am hereafter to bear. This New Year shall with the blessing of Providence be devoted to this purpose. I shall endeavor to be temperate in all things, never to surpass the limits of strict truth in every conversation. To be grave yet never cynical. To be polite towards all persons, to avoid the habit of swearing. To exercise strict control over my feelings in speaking and imagination. Never wantonly to injure another's feelings. To show a due respect for religion at all times.

Fri. Jan. 7th. A New term commenced. Attended the first recitation this morning. Proff. Brocklesby who is appointed to Proff. Davies heard us. His first appearance as a man is less prepossessing than as a Proffessor. May my eyes hold good for the ensuing term. I think of attending a ball this evening given by the light Guards.

Jan. 10. Mon. I attended the Ball as a spectator. I received a letter from my Father Saturday evening, it appears the President has taken advantage of my misfortunes to reduce my standing for scholarship. This is a gross act





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of injustice and as such I will call his attention to it. The election for appointees at the Atheneum comes on soon. A part may be assigned to me, if so I am at a loss whether to receive it or not.

Feb. 9th. 1842. I have accepted an appointment to deliver a poem at the next Atheneum Exhibition. I have taken for a subject the Siege of Damascus. It is an experiment, I hardly dare hope for success.

Feb. 10th. I have within the last hour had the pleasure of shaking hands with Mr. and Mrs. Dickens. Mr. Dickens is favorably known as a distinguished writer. He has edited the Pickwick Papers, Nickolas Nickleby, etc. They are well received throughout the country.

Thanksgiving Day. Nov. 17th. 1842. This day was mostly consumed in a journey with Miss E. Bellamy to Lebanon. On the 18th. which was Friday I went to Norwich where I visited the grave of Uncas. I returned the same day to Lebanon and on the next reached Hartford after an extremely pleasant visit.

We have some hours of merry gladness,  
And some of quiet, sober joy,  
And all the rest is bitter sadness,  
That's gilded like a childish toy.  
I sought for pleasure where men seek,  
In Beauty's rapture, glowing smiles,  
With burning lips I pressed the cheek,  
But turning cursed the Siren's wiles.  
I sought it at the festive board  
Mid sparkling wine, and wit and song,  
But when my fancy upward soared  
I saw the ghosts of misery throng,  
I sought it in the lighted halls  
Where fortunes votaries kneel,  
And watch the shifting card that falls,  
With eyes of hope and hearts of steel,





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Then I cursed the world and all it gives,  
And wrapped me in my mantle cold  
And walked the earth, as one that lives  
With neither heart nor hope, nor soul,  
T'was then I met the pleasant one,  
Whose gentle memory lingereth still,  
As the twilight of the summer sun,  
Sleeps soft upon green wood and hill.

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Senior Year.

Second Term.

January 5th. Thursday Eve. Three years have passed since I commenced a journal, and although I have far from faithfully attended to it, the blotted skeleton recalls vividly the fading scenes of my past college life. This day ushers in a new term at the commencement of a new year, and may kind Providence continue those many blessings for which I have every reason to feel the most fervent Gratitude. And may I be governed in all seasons by these rules which I again write in my journal that I may more faithfully observe them in future.

January 8th. Sunday Eve. Have not attended church today. Passed the forenoon in writing and the afternoon in reading *Gutslaff's* voyages on the coast of China. I have just parted with an old friend who sails next Tuesday for New Orleans, Robert E. Jackson of Tennessee. He came from home last spring and could have entered our class, but preferred joining the Partial Course. He leaves partly on account of his health, and partly from a natural restlessness that makes him desirous of change. In the course of human events there is but a slight chance of my ever meeting him, and if I should, time, and the changes of circumstances will doubtless have rent the few ties which bind fellow students.





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February 6th. Monday. I have been annoyed since Friday evening, with what I think must be a lemon-seed adhering to some part of my throat. I shall take some medical advice if I do not soon find relief. The weather is very cold and the ground covered with a thick mantle of snow. Yet in spite of wind and snow and choking throat I shall call on Mrs. Sigourney during the evening.

February 9th. Thursday. Dr. Ellsworth thinks my throat will not give me any serious trouble. Tuesday evening I called at Mrs. Chapman's, Miss Clerc's, Mrs. Sigourney's where I intended to have called the evening previous. Mrs. Sigourney is mild and unassuming in her address and manners, and very agreeable in conversation. She related several anecdotes concerning the Mohegans, and spoke of a sister of Uncas whom she had once seen. Last evening I attended with Miss Eaton the Institute lecture. It was delivered by young Dana, the author of "Two Years Before The Mast." The subject was the "Source of Human Influences." His style was simple and pure, his delivery distinct and slow but rather *sing song*. He handled the subject in a vigorous manner, but was rather deficient in method or I should say in the arrangement of his discourse. Tonight I shall attend a party at Mrs. Chapman's.

February 14th. Tuesday Eve. St. Valentines. Last evening I attended a small party at Misses Drapers. It was very pleasantly managed, and at rather a late hour I found myself in bed. Tonight it is cold, and the snow drives against the windows with all the force of the North East blast. The storm has lasted from morning. All are engaged in reading or writing Valentines. I have done little to my oration for the Exhibition as yet. Tempus does Fugit.

March 1st. Ash Wednesday. Attended a party last night at Mr. Cones. Had some conversation with Ex-Governor Ellsworth. Last Friday evening attended a large





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party at Misses Drapers. I have completed my Oration for the Atheneum Exhibition. A letter reached me the other day dated at Rome Dec. 20th 1842, from H. I. Sanford with whom I commenced the first part of this journal. God's blessing be with him.

Friday evening March 10th. A splendid comet is now visible in the South West. Its nucleus is below the horizon, but its tail extends 90 to the Zenith. It appears unexpectedly and creates quite a sensation. Tomorrow I oppose in Society the British Claim of a right to search American vessels.

Friday evening March 17th. The comet presents a more brilliant appearance than a week since. It appears at half past seven P. M. and fades about nine P. M. We shall soon see it in the morning. Wednesday evening the tribunal of Seniors and Juniors tried and reprimanded a Freshman for impertinence, profanity and vulgarity. "c'est bien."

Saturday Eve. March 18th. The comet is "non esse videndum," this evening from the clouds which have contrived to wholly obscure it. I was absent from Society during the morning. Passed some time at the Young Men's Institute reading room, in hastily perusing the reminiscences of Colonel Trumbull. Called at Mrs. Chapman's. Passed most of the afternoon and evening at Governor Ellsworth's. Drank tea there in company with Proff. Stewart, Proff. Jackson and Lady, Dr. Elsworth and lady, Governor Ellsworth and lady, Mr. Oliver Ellsworth and his two sisters Misses Harriet and Elizabeth. Miss Harriet has a strong masculine mind, richly stored with information, which her colloquial talents and wonderful sense enable her to display to the best advantage. Miss Elizabeth combines rare personal attractions with a simple goodness of soul that renders her an object of interest and respect.

Monday afternoon March 20th. I have just finished





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Mme De Stael's *Corinne*. I never read a French novel with more exquisite pleasure. It elevates the mind and improves the taste by its rare combination of valuable knowledge and noble sentiment. The character of *Corinne* fills the soul with respect and admiration, it is nobly delineated, and worthily sustained. "Il s'est enfin arrêté, ce coeur qui battoit si vite. Adieu donc."

Tuesday evening March 21st. Two weeks from tonight and the nineteenth Anniversary Exhibition of the Atheneum takes place. We had our first rehearsal tonight, or the attempt, for very few knew their pieces. I among the number was minus. The clouds have moved away, and after three nights of concealment the comet blazes forth in all its splendour, though now fast sinking in the west. Last evening, left *Corinne* at Gov. Ellsworth's, called upon Miss Humphreys ditto Miss Dunham and found that the latter lady had concluded her visit in the city and returned to New York. Called also upon the Misses Sheldons.

Monday morning March 26th. Yesterday attended Mr. Coxe's Church. Have commenced Mme. De Staels *L'Allemagne*. Convalescing from the first cold I have had in four months. The rivers are closed with ice, and the snow is lying the depth of a foot on the ground. We have had sleighing for the last two months and I see very little prospect of our ceasing to have it for two months more. The comet is passing to the North East. Shines brilliantly clear each night.

Tuesday evening March 27th. Very clear and beautiful this evening. The day has been warm and the rain fallen in torrents. It has carried off about one third of the snow. Today I took the stump to electioneer for myself as a candidate for the office of President of the Missionary Association of the College. The Election took place this evening. I was very desirous of obtaining the office, for some peculiar reasons. My chance was small. There were





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two candidates beside myself and I have now for the first time since I have been a member of college failed in attaining any post that I desired, (at the disposal of my fellow students).

Tuesday April 4th. "End of the term". The Examinations of the Senior Class have closed. I have succeeded in passing all, though I had reason to think I might not, my eyes having prevented me from making due preparation. The Athenaeum Exhibition took place last evening. I figured as one of the Orators and have much reason to think I appeared creditably to myself and the Society. This will be my last appearance on the Old Chapel Stage.

Vacation Saturday April 8th. Left Hartford and went in the stage to Plymouth. M. N. Butler carried me the same day from Plymouth an Watertown.

Friday April 14th. At six o'clock in the morning I left home in the post-carriage on my way to New York. The rain fell continually throughout the day. The roads were choked with mud and snow and everything combined to impress me with the belief that I was suffering a penalty for travelling on Good Friday. Stopped at the Pavillion, which I reached about 3 o'clock p.m. Wrote a letter to John I. Kerr and lay down wearily to sleep among strangers.

Saturday April 15th. Left New Haven at 5 a.m. mid fog and rain by the steam boat New York. Obligated to lie to by the fog and after a tedious passage varied only by reading the New World and eating dinner, I arrived in New York at half past two p.m. cheated by my hackman . . . found my friends well at Brooklyn, attended a book auction that evening in Broadway.

Sunday April 16th. In the morning heard a young clergyman preach a sermon, an hour and a half in length. The entire substance of the discourse could be condensed into ten minutes. In the afternoon I heard a Catholic





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Priest, I believe Bishop Hughes, at the Barclay Street Chapel. He preached without notes, his delivery good, his style florid, yet not so as to interfere with the logical nicety of his arguments. The subject was Auricular Confession. Returning to the Ferry I passed through Anthony street which conducted me through the Five Points. The degradation, the squalid wretchedness of God's image, was never more disgustingly presented to my sight. In the evening I listened to a sermon in Dr. Coxe's Church by the Rev. Dr. Mason. The production of a strong mind yet as I think weak in some of its premises. The subject of the sermon was the "injurious tendency of works of Fiction." Dr. Mason differs widely from Lord Kames, but the present class of novels has grown up since Lord Kames wrote.

Monday April 17th. Rain. Rain. Visited the rooms of the Merchants Library Association. Saw a few fine paintings there and Audobons paintings of birds. Went to the Academy of National Design but found it closed. Went to the Court Rooms at the City Hall, to the Police office at the tombs and the State Arsenal. In the evening I went to the Chatham Street Theatre. Heard Forrest and Miss Clifton in the Patricians Daughter and the Gladiator. Was delighted with the performances. Returning with my young companion Filly, to Mrs. Mortons at a very late hour he found his pass key missing. Then came the climax of the tragedy, there we stood for an hour in the cold and rain ringing and knocking to gain admittance, ere we succeeded.

Tuesday April 18th. Rain. Rain. Visited Mrs. Butters. Purchased Kents Com. for \$12. and in the evening went with McLean and a student from Saint Mary's to Niblos Gardens to hear Mr. Russell sing. An audience of two thousand was assembled, the Beauty and Fashion of New York. His songs were simple yet touching, his accompaniment on the piano splendid, and every word





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distinctly heard. Passed the night with Samuel McLean at the City Hotel.

Wednesday April 19th. In the morning visited my old friends at the Theological Seminary. Saw Ogden whose appearance at college I noticed in my journal of Freshman Year. Dined there. In the afternoon visited Mr. Bickers. Returned to Brooklyn, dressed, and in the evening called with McLean at Mrs. Chapman's and Mrs. Bacon's.

Thursday April 20th. Rode out in the morning to Uncle Roberts, returned in the afternoon. In the evening went to the Park Theatre, stayed only long enough to hear the "Merry Wives of Windsor." Hackett played Sir John Falstaff, not as good as I anticipated.

Friday April 21st. In the morning called at some of the law offices. In the afternoon rode out to Greenwood with Miss Whitmore and Miss Griffin. Intended to go home the next day but found it necessary to remain if I wished to enter my name in an office for the purpose of having the three years of my legal study commence. Passed the evening at the Orphans fair in Brooklyn.

Saturday April 22nd. Spent the morning in preparing affidavits to procure a certificate of Clerkship. Wrote a letter upon the subject to President Totten. Visited my friends at the Seminary, spent the evening at Mrs. Filly's.

Monday, April 24th. Steamboat was to leave at six in the morning. Got on board at a quarter past five for fear I should be late, on account of the fog it did not leave until 8 o'clock a.m. We arrived at Bridgeport in about four and a half hours. Dined at the Sterling Hotel. Waited in the cars three hours for the steamer connected with the line to arrive. Much amused by an old lady. Reached Newtown in one hour, went to Dr. Booth's. Called that evening with Cousin Mary at ————— Next went to bed and slept gloriously.





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Tuesday April 25th. Rode on horseback to see my cousin Dr. Wm. Booth. Found him well, village peasant, played backgammon. Dined, visited Mrs. E. Armitage's grave, the Gaol, and the Rev. T. T. Guion. Played whist, took tea and rode back to Newtown in 1 hour and 45 minutes.

Wednesday April 26th. Woke up, found every limb lame, and every muscle sore, the horrible next day of a horseback ride. In the afternoon left in the post carriage with Aunt Ann for Watertown.

#### End of Vacation Ramblings.

Thursday April 27th. Rain. Rain. Here am I bruised and sore at Watertown, writing out the journal of my travels with a cheerful fire and a comfortable room to console me.

Monday May 1st. Last Saturday was thrown from a horse, struck upon my head, which yet pains me although no external injury appears. Dr. Elton thinks it a jar and has prescribed physic. Tomorrow I shall go to Hartford, though I am forced today to keep in my room. It rained violently last night, it is now clearing off with a high wind. Played draughts with my Aunt Ann. This is the last day of a burdensome vacation.

Sunday May 14th. During the past week I have read "Rienzi" or "The Tribune," and commenced my Oration for Commencement. Subject, "The Elements of National





Greatness." Commenced teaching myself how to write a respectable hand, poor encouragement this. No leaves on the forest trees or college hedge yet.

Thursday May 18th. Last Tuesday I accompanied President Totten in a surveying expedition to learn the height of Talcott Range of hills. We measured them by the Barometer. We found the height above the level of the Connecticut 663.2 feet. Last evening I attended a small party at Miss Goodridge's. I was invited on my Father's account to Governor Ellsworth's to a party given by him to the members of the Legislature. Tonight I attend a small party at Bishop Brownell's.

Tuesday May 23rd. Summer has at last come forth in all its beauty. The weather is delightful. Last evening I attended a party given to the Senior Class at Prof. Jackson's. I find that this dissipation unhinges the mind.

June 3rd. I have attended during the past week the hearing of the petition of Martha E. Miller for a divorce from her husband Charles F. Miller before a committee of the Legislature. The trial excited deep public interest. The case was argued in behalf of the petitioner by the late Lieutenant Governor Charles Hawley and Ralph Ingersoll, for the Respondent by Charles Chapman and Isaac Toucy Esquires. Mr. Hawley made a sound, able plea, simple in style and enforced by a good deal of action. Mr. Chapman's manner was good, he presented his subject in the most clear and distinct manner, and treated it with warmth and energy. His style is remarkable for perspicuity and elegance, while he manages the pathetic and the satirical with equal dexterity. Mr. Toucy is cold and dignified in his speaking unless warmed into excitement, which is not often the case. Mr. Ingersoll speaks with fluency. He appeals to the passions of his auditors in a very effective manner, and his peroration was truly eloquent.

Friday June 9th. The Legislature adjourned yesterday morning and Father returned home. Last Monday I





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procured some of Aaron Burrs papers and correspondence etc. I found them lying on the deck of a steam schooner at the wharf. There were several large bales of his and other persons papers which had been sold and shipped to be remanufactured at the mills in this state from New York. Some persons more successful than myself found among the mass which we were searching, original verses of Burrs, letters from Washington and other great men of that day.

Monday Eve. June 12th. This morning commenced writing my Commencement Oration on the Roman Law. Have prepared myself to write upon that subject in some measure, from Selden, Grotius, Kent, Gibbon, Blackstone Puffendorf, etc. This evening walked out to the college grounds with Cousin Charlotte, Miss F. Shelton, and Miss Elisa Trumbull, a descendant of the old Governor. I have seen very little of Miss Trumbull, but I can say she is the only lady I ever saw whom I would like to have for a wife. She is beautiful, accomplished, and amiable, and if I was brought much into contact with her perchance my stoicism would forsake me and *I*, even *I* would fall in love. But alas tonight my gaiter heels were an inch and a half high, so that in addition to being dull, miserable and awkward, I tottered along like a tipsy giant. Bon Soir.

Saturday June 17th. The anniversary of the battle of Bunker Hill. Upon this day and perhaps at this very hour, John Tyler and the people of the United States are celebrating the completion of a monument that when the grandchild of every man gathered there shall have rotted in the grave, will yet stand to commemorate a great and solemn event. Evening before last I called with Marshall at Mrs. Sigourney's. Met there Dr. Jarvis and the Poets, the "Rev. Messieurs, Everest and Coxe." Last evening I attended a very pleasant small party at Mrs. Woodbridge's. This morning debated in the Society the Puritan Question, spoke in behalf of the Puritans.





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Wednesday morn. June 21st. Monday I was elected College Marshall, for the purpose of officiating at the reception of the President. Last evening I was at a Conversation or party at Mrs. Sigourney's "Cottage ornée." Today the Chief Magistrate was to have partaken of the hospitality of the citizens of Hartford. After officiating as Marshall I anticipated a great pleasure in meeting the President and Cabinet at Mr. Bridge's at a party given in honor to John Tyler and Suite to which I had been invited. But alas, For the vanity of human expectations. The President is prevented from coming by the sudden death of Mr. Legare, Attorney General. There will accordingly be no parade, no broiling in the sun.

Monday July 3rd. For the last ten days it has been intensely hot. Mercury being up to 88, afternoons upon an average by Fahrenheit's thermometer. A striking change in the temperature of the atmosphere occurred yesterday, in less than 4 hours the mercury fell from 90 to 70. Last evening was at a small party given by Oliver Ellsworth who leaves tomorrow for Valparaiso. Prof. Jackson has invited me to go with him to the Mediterranean. I have written Father upon the subject, but I entertain no hopes of him permitting me to go or furnishing the funds necessary.

Tuesday July 4th. Mr. Hortons of my class and Sanford delivered the poem and Oration in the Athenaeum this morning. Walked downtown with Sterling of Louisiana. He met a Yankee clock-pedlar who had often staid at his friends houses in L. The pedlar was a fine specimen of a Yankee, shrewd etc. and asked Bill to come out to New Hartford and pay him a visit. Quite a military but not much civic display in the city. Listened to an oration from Mr. Hammersley in the South Church. Here I am in No. 43, intending in about an hour to go and see the fireworks, so much patriotism.

July 10th Monday. I have nearly completed my oration for Commencement upon "The Roman Law." I





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have been appointed by the Society to deliver the Valedictory in behalf of the graduating class, before the Society. Yesterday evening listened to a Lecture from the President, upon the proofs of Christianity. Last Friday evening was invited to a party at Mrs. Robert Watkinson's and to another at Mr. Grant's Cottage, where I very pleasantly passed the evening.

Monday July 17th. College days are drawing to a close. It is a sad thought that one must leave the walls where life has flowed so smoothly, and the friends whose example, and whose intercourse, have been, the former a source of profit, and the latter a source of pleasure. Life is before me, and I am already careworn in determining what course I will take. Thank Heaven I have disposed of one bore, my oration for Commencement "The Roman Law". It is completed, passed through the President's hands, and nearly committed. I stand third in rank at the next Commencement. This standing is better than I dared to hope for when my eyes were so weak, but the President told me last week that if I had not lost a little standing in Greek Tragedies 3rd Term Junior, through the diseased state of my eyes that I would have taken the Valedictory Oration. I have been elected by the Society to deliver the Valedictory before them from the Graduating Class. It would have gratified me to have taken the first or second honor at the Commencement when my class graduated, but Providence by afflicting me with a heavy dispensation deprived me even of the power to effect it. Many lose the disposition to attempt it, many think themselves unable, but when one has a prize of some value, and it is in his grasp, to lose it sends some sorrow to the soul. God grant that this may not be the type of my success in life. Give me anything but disappointments.

Wednesday July 19th. Within the last hour I have attended the last recitation of the Senior Class. God knows that with a heavy heart I passed for the last time the oaken





threshold of a college recitation room. About 2200 recitations have I attended in college. The President invited the class to a party at his house tomorrow night. In dismissing the class the President paid a very handsome compliment to the scholarship and ability displayed during the year he had heard our recitations. Prof. Jackson sailed yesterday for Europe or rather left here for the purpose of sailing soon.

Friday afternoon July 21st. This is the first day of the vacation previous to Commencement. Yesterday I passed my examinations and the Class were dismissed until the morning of Commencement. Last evening we all attended a party given by the President. Mr. Castenis, a Greek, a native of the unfortunate isle of Scio was present. He is a gentleman of great classical attainments and refined manners. He is worthy of Greece in her better days. I have seen him years since in the Albanian costume, the most magnificent and picturesque I have ever seen worn. And as he repeated the lines, so beautifully written by the La-Fayette of his country:

“ Oh who is more brave than the dark Suliote  
In his snowy chemise; or shaggy capote?”

Or as he danced brandishing his Turkish sabre, and striking the sheath of his attaghan to the sound of the Albanian war song, one's blood thrilled with the lofty or sad thoughts which came crowding upon the mind. He was speaking of practising law upon his return to Greece. I observed that “in his native land there were objects enough to stir up eloquence”. “Yes” (he replied), “there is enough in Greece to make a dead man eloquent.” The party was very pleasant and broke up about midnight. I have spent today very unprofitably, but quite “a la vacation”.

August 1st Tuesday afternoon. It is really a sad time for us seniors. With me it is a most busy one. Vacation has passed or rather not been.





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August 3rd. Commencement is over except the party which is to be this evening at the President's. College life. Good Night. The world is before me. God grant that I walk the path of an upright man. Last evening met a gentleman at Mrs. Sigourney's where I took tea, an acquaintance of Sir Walter Scott. His name was Prevoes. I had the third appointment in the class. My Oration upon the Roman Law was successful, but I am sick and have been for the last three days.

Watertown August 5th. Saturday afternoon. I left Hartford yesterday noon. I have recovered from my illness, shall leave soon for New York where I intend to study law. The quiet of this little village is soothing and attractive as compared with the bustle of a College Commencement, and the hurry of packing up and leave-taking. This is the last of college life during which this journal was brought into existence and continued. As I turn from the tranquil scenes of the cloister for the last time, if I may use the phrase, to the busy hum of life and exertion, I cannot take leave of my classmates without some little record of them in the order in which they have for almost four years sat upon the recitation bench.

First. *Joseph P. Taylor* of Glastonbury, Conn. He is the son of an Englishman who has respectably educated a large family, though he has only acquired means as a sail maker. He is about 24 years of age, pious, a good scholar, and intends to take orders. He is kind, persevering, and honorable.

*Thomas Preston* of Hartford, Conn. He is the son of a flour merchant, a self-made but respectable man. 19 years of age, pious, a good scholar, and intends to take orders. He is deficient in delicacy of feeling, and judgment, and is rather fond of talking about his principles. He is a High Churchman, rather florid in composition and may rise to eminence in the Church.





*Francis Clerc* Hartford, Conn. He is the son of Laurent Clerc, a Frenchman and teacher in the Deaf and Dumb Asylum at Hartford. Both of Clercs parents were deaf and dumb. He was sent to France at nine years old and returned at 16, accomplished in the French and tolerably versed in the German, Greek, and Latin languages. He is 20 years of age, pious, a good scholar, and intends to take orders. He is a good writer, amiable, and frank in his feelings and actions while conscientious in the highest degree. He is the most perfect character in the Class and has a sound and comprehensive mind.

*Sanford I. Horton* Medway Mass. His parents are dead. He pursued the trade of a cabinet maker. Caught in a religious excitement, he turned his attention to study. He grafted Episcopacy upon his old Puritan stock. Horton is about 27 years old, pious, but often led astray by the violence of his passions. Not possessed of that application or vigour of mind necessary for a good scholar, and intends to take orders. He possesses the faculty of making himself at once a favorite with every pious woman over 50. He is kind and warm in his feelings.

*William E. Curtis* Watertown Conn. He is the son of Holbrook Curtis, a lawyer. He is 19 years of age and intends to study law.

*Henry T. Welles* Glastenbury, Conn. He is the only child of an old and respectable farmer of that name. He is 22 years of age and intends to study law at some future period. Welles is deficient in energy and frankness, and somewhat cunning. Great prudence is his chief attribute. He is a passable scholar and liberal, or rather, not mean.

*James Lawrence Scott*, Boston Mass. His Father died leaving him young and poor. He was an apprentice to a copper-plate printer. After his apprenticeship had expired he continued to work at his trade, though sometimes acting parts at a theatre in Boston. He became pious after he had laid up from his wages more than \$1,000. He





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then commenced studying, though previous to this he had published some tales and fugitive poems. He is 30 years of age. His talents for composing and the want of early mental discipline have prevented him from taking a very respectable stand as a scholar. He is preparing to take orders. Scott is kind and obliging with a rare fund of wit and anecdote. He is a warm friend and a bitter enemy.

*William Long* New Hampshire. He is the son of an old sea captain nearly 80 years old, who after following the seas for 50 years retired with a large family upon a small farm in New Hampshire. William Long worked in early life as a carpenter. He is about 28 years old, pious, a good scholar, and intends to take orders. He is somewhat irritable in his feeling and contracted in his views of things, but honest, sincere, and persevering.

*Henry Vibbert Gardiner.* He is the son of a shoemaker from Windham, Connecticut. Gardiner first followed his fathers profession. Then that of a Methodist priest and finally entered college so as to take orders in the Episcopal church. He is about 30 years of age, pious, a most miserable scholar, and a person utterly void of all greatness of thought, soul, or feeling. His little soul revolves in a smaller sphere and is only great when greedily swallowing the ultra movements of the day.

*John Ker* Eastville Va. He is the son of a physician who is also a merchant and of Scotch extraction as the name purports. He is 20 years of age, inclined to dissipation, a negligent scholar, and intends to be a physician. (We sit upon the recitation bench in the order in which we were examined to enter College). He entered College third term Freshman. Ker is one of those persons who are injured by being thought a genius. He possesses good abilities, great beauty of person, is a handsome declaimer, and good musician and mimic, and has a great deal of wit, generosity, and good nature. On the other hand he is idle, wanting in moral principles, and unless something inter-





venes, will go down into his grave an object of commiseration.

*George Ker*, a brother of the former. He is 19 years of age, moral, and intends to study medicine. He is the reverse of his brother. Of moderate abilities, yet by his perseverance a good scholar, selfish, narrow in his views, and avaricious except for the gratification of self. Ill natured, yet by his perseverance and selfishness he will provide well for himself through life.

*Fielding L. Taylor* of Bell Farm Gloucester County Va. He is the son of a lawyer who died some years since. 18 years of age, a poor scholar, and intends to be a lawyer. He is rather vain and fond of exhibiting himself as the son of the Old Dominion. He is young and his good qualities are perhaps obscured by the temptations of youth and inexperience.

*Nathaniel B. Marshall* of Faquier County Va. He is the son of a planter and the grandson of the late Chief Justice. Aged 20, a good scholar and intends to be a physician. He is small but handsome, and polished in his manners. He possesses generosity, courage and vanity, but is in reality superior to many who affect to despise him. He with F. L. Taylor entered college first term Sophomore as did John Weller Priest of New York City. Priest is 19 years of age, pious, a good scholar, and intends to be a civil engineer. He is the son of a clerk in an auction store in New York. He is one of those characters who are fated to be the dupes of mankind. Inexperienced yet in their own estimation not shrewd and sharp sighted they are forever the victims of some humbug. So it is with Priest. In college his name has become the synonym of gullibility. Yet he is a superior mathematician, a fellow of infinite reading and information, and withall most sincere and willing to listen to advice from a friend. Yet most of it seems thrown away upon him.

*Frederick W. Cornwall* of Cheshire, Conn. He is the son of a deceased Episcopal clergyman, aged 22, a decent





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scholar, moral and does not know what profession to pursue. Cornwall is deficient in energy and conversational powers. He never does a foolish thing or a wise one. He entered 1st term Soph.

*Thomas Davenport Ozanne* of the Isle of Guernsey, is the younger son of a Frenchman residing on that Island. He joined the class 3rd term Senior, is about 28 years of age, pious a good scholar, and intends to take orders. He possesses a vast fund of information and some accentricities. Beers and Bradin who took their diplomas with us have always recited with some former class.

Thus have I sketched briefly and imperfectly the characters of my classmates. So that when old age steals upon me and memory recalls the scenes of college life, I shall have some slight memorials of "auld lang syne." My principal associates in the class were partly from choice and partly from accident. I give their names place here because God knows we are never to meet again as we have so often done. J. P. Taylor, Clerc, Marshall, and F. L. Taylor "mes amis." Many have left our class as they have from various causes left college. Among those who have left were Norman L. Brainard now in the Law School at Harvard University. Henry L. Sanford now on his way to the Azores, Edward L. Newton studying law in Wisconsin, Stephen Noble, I know not where he is, Edward C. Franklin studying medicine with Dr. Motte in New York. Andrew A. Welton and Oliver his brother died Junior Year. Walker who left third term Freshman. F. A. Boardman who is married in Ohio. This is all that I remember now who have left the class. I have now done with college life, this is the last entry. Henceforth, I am in the world and shall speak of the things in the world. But it is with a heavy heart and sorrowing eyes, that I gaze upon the new prospect which opens before me. A new Era dawns, the *Old Regime* has passed away. With a sad heart do I write that here is,

THE END OF COLLEGE LIFE.





*A NEW DYNASTY, STUDY OF LAW.*

August 9th. Left home 6 a.m. rode in the rain to New Haven, came in the boat to New York and at 7 p.m. was domesticated at Miss Hayt's 209 Fulton Street.

August 10th. Went to Mr. Livingston's office and commenced Blackstone, walked in the rain to Brooklyn and got well soaked, though I brought an umbrella to keep me otherwise.

Friday night August 11th. Read twenty pages in Blackstone, copied in the office three hours, and dined at Delmonico's, with the *Apollis*, so a few who dine at that establishment are termed. Among whom are James and Samuel McLean and a Mr. Wallace, all Scotchmen and Mr. Filley and myself from the land of steady habits.

Saturday night Aug. 12th. Been at the office all day. Read 33 pages in Chittys Blackstone 2nd Vol. Dined at Delmonicos with Mr. Wallace, he is a high Tory. Disputed with him about O'Connel and the success which has attended our institutions, I was sleepy all the afternoon from eating too much dinner, formed a resolution not to make a hog of myself in future. Coming home suffered myself to be cheated out of a sixpence, said nothing but hoped the poor man would get his next sixpence in a more desirable manner, moralised on it but before I left his shop he tried the same manoeuvre in a different form. Find my time passes very pleasantly at present.

Monday night Aug. 14th. Last Saturday evening I rode with Mr. Filley to Coney Island. We left Brooklyn an hour after sunset, and drove the whole distance 10 1/2 miles in 70'. The full moon rose in splendid beauty. For the first time I stood on the shore of the broad Atlantic, the surf breaking at my feet. Everything in nature united to give an increased effect to this Heavenly Diorama. Yesterday I heard Mr. Bachs preach in the morning, in the afternoon I staid at home, today I have been in the office most of the time reading Blackstone. Life drags on





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in the beaten path. The old stumbling blocks are ever presenting themselves, gluttony, idleness, and frivolity waste many precious moments. Mrs. Filly and her sweet little child have arrived today. Blackstone served up as usual.

Friday Aug. 18th. One day is the *Daguerreotype* of another. I may as well give the history 24 hours to answer for all. At half past six in the morning I rise, at 7 breakfast, at 8 go over to New York and sit in the office and read Blackstone until 10 when Mr. Livingston and clients then enter. I then pause or write until 11 when I commence Blackstone and continue reading until 1/2 past one o'clock when I give up the civilian for the inner man and dine at Delmonicos, the French Restaurant, upon potage and pastry. I then return about 1/2 past 2 o'clock and converse, read newspapers, etc. until 1/2 past 3 o'clock. I then read the learned Knight Sir William until 6 when I cross over to Brooklyn, sup at 7 o'clock and spend the evening at my room writing, reading, etc. at half past 10 o'clock I retire, and sleep until 3 o'clock in the morning, then come the market waggons rattling over the pavements, and I remain until the hour of rising, rolling upon the mattress and trying to shut the noise out of my ears.

August 24th. Thursday Eve. My eyes have regained their usual strength. I have read the first book of Blackstone and have reviewed about 100 pages. Passed last evening at Mrs. Mortons. Monday night we were visited by a terrible storm, the turfed terraces of the Heights were swept away, cellars filled, etc.

August 29th. Tuesday morning. I have commenced Warren's Law Studies. Sunday Attended Mr. Johnson's Church, and resolved to do so in future for three reasons. 1st. because I shall go to that Church from its being near to my boarding house with greater regularity than to any other. 2nd because I shall hear Prof. Henry preach, a man whose talents I highly respect. 3rd. because I can pro-





cure a seat there at the least expense. Yesterday two college friends called at the office, Chas. Matthews of Louisiana and Wm. Colt of Hartford, Barrows is also in the city. I called to see them last night but found them out.

September 1st. Friday eve. The first day of autumn comes with the appropriate accompaniment of a north easter. Tuesday I attended a Buffalo Hunt. Shades of Nimrod. A buffalo hunt at Hoboken! About 3 p.m. I reached the scene of action, about 600 acres I should guess were enclosed in a post and rail fence and five yards from this another fence surrounding the former and in the interval the buffalos were to be pursued and taken with the lasso. It is said 40,000 persons were present. The buffalos were set at liberty in the Lane. The hunter dressed as an Indian on horseback commenced the pursuit, the music struck up, the dense masses of people rushed forward to see the sport, one buffalo was fairly captured with the lasso, when suddenly breaking the enclosures some rushed into the area and some into the fields without. The hunter now commenced his task in good faith, the people ran, and the buffalos ran, one man fell from a tree and died, and several persons were slightly injured by the animals. Very many sad and ludicrous incidents occurred. I stood in a New Jersey marsh with the mosquitoes torturing me and the sun pouring the most suffocating heat upon my head and not one breath of air Abraham like stirring, yet laugh, I had to at some of the scenes. One buffalo dashed through the Elysian fields down the rocks and struck out far into the Hudson and when I left the ground they were still at liberty and rushing frantic through the country upon all sides. I spent the evening very pleasantly at Mrs. Mortons.

Sunday 6 o'clock p.m. Sept. 3rd. Heard Prof. Henry at church this morning. This afternoon I commenced and finished Capt. Basil Halls "Winter at Schloss Hanfield in lower Styria." Have not for years read anything that has more deeply interested me. The death-bed of the Coun-





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tess, the grief of Joseph, are described with a simplicity equal to Sterne. It is circumstances, the realities, not the description which moves. I have commenced reading a few lines in the Iliad every day after dinner. I commenced at the XVI Book where I left off two years since. . . . Written 24 lines of would be poetry and entitled it the Norwegian Emigrants Lament or Song, Sept. 4th in default of other matter I write in the choice repository aforesaid:

*Norwegian Emigrants Song.*

Swift glides the bark upon the wave.  
My Fathers braved this sea,  
And though the winds so wildly rave,  
There is no fear in me;  
Far from the hills that gave me birth,  
From all that still is dear,  
And from the old ancestral hearth,  
O'er the broad deep I steer.

Old Norway sleeps beneath the sky,  
A summer cloud at rest,  
That dimly lifts its head on high  
Up from the water's breast.  
Oh then "Good Bye" to Fatherland,  
My heart must stay with thee,  
For sad I seek the distant strand,  
Where no one cares for me.

But why should I regret the past?  
And why should I repine?  
These griefs may not forever last,  
And joys may yet be mine;  
Our Northern Skalds have sung of old  
The treasure of that shore;





And rich with furs, and rich with gold  
I'll see my hills once more.

Then fill the bowl, the Runic Bowl,  
And quaff the liquid fire,  
Bright visions float around my soul,  
Of home and kin and sire;  
I'm on the mountain side again,  
Where I was wont to be.  
But why rejoice, it is in vain?  
Life's toils are o'er for me.

Sept. 9th. Saturday night. The week is almost closed and I have passed it less profitably than I could have wished. I sent my poem to the Editors of the New York Tribune, it is not yet in print and I think there are some reasons in the matter itself why it should not be.

Wednesday evening, Sept 13th. Copied two declarations that consumed most of the day, and commenced reading Blackstone II Book of Review. Called last evening upon Mrs. Butters. Inquired if she was at home, found that she had been brought to bed with a girl since I was last there, discussed a bottle of porter with the happy husband, I came down to Brooklyn at half past ten.

Friday eve. Sept. 19th. Have been for some time reading Lyttleton's Letters upon English History. Have this moment finished the reign of Henry VIII, the style in which they are written is chaste, figures properly introduced, few, but not always happy. I read it so that I may gain a better knowledge of Blackstone. Life passes very pleasantly with me.

September 29th. I am twenty years of age today. The longer I live the more forcibly am I struck with the many proofs that the Bible is the work of inspiration. No eulogy has ever yet portrayed a minimum of its merits. To-day I step forth from the teens into manhood. From the walls of a college and the endearing intimacy of many





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warm hearts I have emerged to take my stand upon the broad stage of life.

Saturday eve. Oct. 6th. A dreary Northeaster without, and a cold heart within. 3 weeks since I joined the Hamiltonian Literary Association, many of the members are young lawyers, and fine speakers, so that I anticipate much pleasure and profit from the connexion. Next Monday eve I make my debut, upon the constitutional question, "Can Congress rightly make the Abolition of slavery conditional upon the admission of a Territory into the Union." My heart sinks at the thought of rising to speak. I only trust that I may not leave the impression that I am an overgrown blockhead, for so I must appear in comparison with my colleague and opponents. Norman L Brainard, Frank Clerc, J. P. Taylor called upon me yesterday. Last evening I heard Macready play Hamlet, he commenced hoarse and ended admirably.

Monday eve. Oct. 16th, Find myself moved into the third loft. Attended Mr. Johnson's Church and Mr. Stone's Church yesterday.

Oct. 20th. 8 of 12 p. m. I have this moment returned from the Park Theatre having heard Mr. Macready play. I had the pleasure of listening to him the other evening in Hamlet but his Macbeth surpasses anything. His words yet ring in my ears. "He was not for a day but for all time," is truly said by Shakespeare. World how ungenerous thou art, Some for thy welfare devote fortune, happiness, life, but to the bard only thou yielddest immortality. "Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow," I may say with Macbeth for it only lacks 20 of tomorrow. The clock is striking. Life is like a "poor player that struts his brief hour upon the stage." "Malheur! malheur! comment echapper aux pensées qui naissent dans mon ame et se soulèvent contre moi?"

"Dies irae, dies illa,  
Solvit saeculum in favilla,





Iudex ergo cum sedebit.  
 Quidquid latet apparebit.  
 Nil inultum remanebit.  
 Quid sum miser tunc dicturus?  
 Quem patronum rogaturus?  
 Cum vix iustus sit securus?"

"Ciel! pourquoi donc suis je né?"

Oct. 21st. Slept little this morning and have felt miserably all day, done nothing but trifle away the time.

Thursday evening. November 2d. For a long time I have neglected my poor journal. It has been too cold to write in my room, but tonight I have a cheerful fire upon the hearth and can well afford a few words. Scarce a fortnight is the interval, yet how much is there to record which has varied the quiet of my monotonous life. I am appointed to speak against this proposition of Adam Smith's next Monday eve at the "Hamiltonian". Viz "That without legal regulation, all the capital and labor of a country, will, of a necessity, be fully employed and applied the most advantageously to the owners of Capital, those who perform the labor, and to the whole society." I shall commence preparing myself tonight. I have shaken hands with Marshall Bertrand within a few days. He was short, fat, and bald with bright black eyes, short whiskers, white face, wrinkled, with blue coat and pantaloons and white vest. He appeared to be a brave great and good man and so he is. I was the other day at the sight of Wiers embarkation of the Pilgrims. "God is with us" is upon the colors.

Nov. 3rd. I have today been introduced to Col. Johnson the "Killer" of Tecumseh, he is short, fat, dressed in black with white head and light blue eyes and appears to be almost 70 years of age. He is gentlemanly and erect in his bearing and is quite affable. Mr. Morton had a second hemorrhage at the lungs this morning, it was owing I fear to his imprudence, God grant that he recover.





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November 5th. Sunday night. Heard Prof. Henry this morning, listened to Dr. Hawks this afternoon who delivered an eloquent discourse upon the proof of the divinity of Christ. He is a fine looking or rather appearing man and speaks admirably.

Nov. 10th. Friday evening. Passed the evening with Henry Sanford who has lately arrived from the Azores. His Uncle the late M. C. was present. Saw Fanny Shelton last evening. I have just seen a notice of the death of Col. Trumbull. He is the last of Washington's Aids. Truly it may be said "the last link is broken". I have often hoped that I should have the pleasure of meeting him somewhere but that will never be at least upon earth. He was of the same age as my grandfather Edmond.

November 12th. Sunday eve. Heard Dr. Hawks preach this morning. He was excellent in style, sentiment, and delivery. It is cold, dark, dreary November weather. I have attempted this evening a few lines which shall go into this repository of "omnium versum":

The summer leaves each autumn blast  
Whirls rustling at our feet.  
The summer days with clouds o'ercast  
No more we joyous greet;  
So man is like the flowers of spring  
That sweetly bloom awhile  
But autumn storms will surely bring  
A pain for every smile.  
But storms will not forever last  
The clouds will pass away  
That gathered now so thick and fast  
Form such a dark array  
The summer of our hopes will come  
And brilliantly the sun





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Shall break upon that harvest home  
Where man his course has run.

Nov. 12th. 1843.

Wm. E. Curtis.

Nov. 16th, Thursday eve, and a dark rainy Nov. evening it is. I yesterday found that the young man was not about to leave Mr. Jordan's office until May next whose place I wished to occupy there as student. So that I find myself disappointed after having made arrangements to enter that office. I must make another arrangement. Mr. Morton had another hemorrhage of the lungs this evening. His condition is extremely critical. God serve him a restoration of health is my fervent ejaculation. Yesterday I visited Mr. Leavitt's house for the purpose of seeing the paintings, many of them are very beautiful. In the evening I called upon Mr. Butters where I passed the evening very pleasantly. I saw Mr. Jones there whom I have not seen for a long time. The 7th of this month I commenced Kent's Commentaries. Perhaps it is the November air that weighs heavily upon my spirits but many vexations and disappointments seem hanging like clouds around my prospects.

The shades of night have gathered 'round,  
The chilling blast sweeps by,  
While rattling comes the tempest's sound,  
Like squadrons rushing by.  
Oh sad this night is to my soul  
When mournful thoughts draw near,  
As funeral knells that sadly toll  
The death of one that's dear.

My childish days have fled for aye,  
My youth hastes to its prime,  
While scarce a star is in that sky,  
Where points the hand of time.





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Shall vain Regret, and broken hope,  
    Embitter all my life?  
Oh no! with dauntless soul, I'll cope  
    In the unequal strife.

Wm. E. Curtis  
Evening. Nov. 16th.  
1843.

Nov. 17th. Friday eve. Passed most of the day in drawing and copying two Supreme Court Declarations. Priest called in the morning to see me. I have spent the day pleasantly and profitably.

When cares corroding pass away,  
And leave the troubled spirit free,  
Hope sheds her light upon our way,  
Like moon-beams on the stormy sea;  
Then clear the path, and fair the gale  
While heedlessly we spread each sail.

Nov. 18th. Saturday eve. In one hour more and one week of the precious few allotted to man will have passed, irrevocably passed. Read some, wrote some, and walked some today. Priest spent the evening with me.

Time, time, oh quickly thou fliest!  
Man, man, thou confest, thou diest.

Nov. 19th. Sunday eve. Have passed the day at Uncle Robert's. Walked into Brooklyn in the afternoon. I brought with me a number of my grandfather's letters to his daughter Mary. Mrs. Armitage commenced copying them into a book, but the work was arrested by her death. He was truly a great and good man, and he showed it in the field of battle, in the councils of the nation, and upon the Judicial Bench. God grant that my life may be like his.





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The voice is hushed that oft of yore,  
Broke sweetly on my ear.  
And in this weary life no more  
Its soothing music shall I hear.

Nov. 20th. Monday eve. Drafted a Foreclosure Bill in Chancery "mon premier attendat." Read 20 pages of Kent's Com's. Shall go to attend the Hamilton this evening.

Nov. 21st. Tuesday eve. Went to Whitehall at noon to see Capt. Coggshele off who sails today for England, he has boarded with us for some days and we have become quite attached to him. He is a fine good-hearted old gentleman. Wrote a letter this afternoon. My old college friend and tutor M. F. Hyde arrived here tonight. I have done little today at the law. Time passes faster than I improve it. Conversing with Mr. Hyde brings college days fresh to my mind.

Those years have gone, those pleasant years,  
So sweetly passed of "auld lang syne,"  
Like childhood's hopes and childhood's tears,  
They never never will be mine.

But memory brings those scenes to view,  
As distant sunshine to the soul,  
That shows in colors clear and true  
The Past where clouds obscuring roll.

But I shall soon forget those days  
Like fleeting dreams shall see them pass  
When journeying on, this frame decays  
And cares my weary steps harass.

Nov. 21st. 12 o'clock.  
p.m. 1843.

Nov. 25th. Sat. eve. This is the anniversary of the evacuation of New York. Sixty years ago and the noon-





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day sun shone for the last time on British bayonets as their columns defiled from Broadway to the place of embarkation. The military display of today was good. Marshall Bertrand and the Comte his son reviewed the troops at City Hall. Last evening I heard David Graham speak at the Court of Sessions in behalf of Raggé and his wife. His delivery was fluent and forcible. His action vehement. His position was erect while his countenance was very expressive. In short though I think that he wants the graces, yet he certainly possesses all the effective powers of the orator. He is very ingenious in reasoning and has a capital knowledge of the law. Time glides by without my making that progress in my law studies which I deem most desirable.

Life is short, and Time is long  
Man is weak, but God is strong.

Nov. 26th. Sun. eve. Have not been to church today. Read some and copied some of grandfather Edmonds letters.

Tuesday Nov. 28th, eve. Last evening I called upon Miss Betts. Today was at the trial of Snowdon and Millett. Patent case.

Dec. 3rd. Sunday eve. Heard Mr. Johnson in the morning. Walked out Myrtle Ave. after church. At sunset walked with Mr. Hyde to the Heights south of the city. The view was enchanting, one of Nature's and man's most glorious panoramas.

The shadows of night were gathering around,  
The blasts of December swept piercingly by,  
While a wanderer gazed in sorrow profound  
O'er a scene of rare beauty, the cloud-crested sky.

Dec. 8th. Read 100 pages in Kent, at the City Hall, at Bartlett and Welfords book store, saw an arithmetic manuscript 1435 date, a copy of the Theodocian Code, etc. and the Rev. Wm. Morgan. Thanksgiving Day.





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Dec. 14th. It is extremely cold. The mercury is at 15. I shall dine at Mr. Morton's and then go over to New York. The family are at Church. College Thanksgivings and college days are passing into the horizon.

Christmas. Attended mass at the Cathedral this morning. Pyncheon called after my return. This is to me a most lonely Christmas. Classmates and old friends are scattered far and wide. Life looks cheerless and dreary yet I thank God for many blessings.

Dec. 27th. Wed. eve. One year has almost gone, to how little purpose have I lived for more than twenty years. I have some prospect of entering another office for the purpose of studying. But some untoward circumstance I fear will intervene to break it up as has been the case in now so many instances.

Dec. 28th. Fri. eve. This day has passed not without some events interesting to me. I have made an arrangement with Mr. Noyes, to enter his office on the memorable 8th of Jan. next. I have also finished Kents Com's. after reading them carefully and looking out many of the references. I have today learned that Elizabeth Prince is to be married to Mr. Child of Rochester, her brother informs that he is a suitor every way desirable, Heaven give her such a one! She has been the playmate of my childhood, and the companion of my maturer years. She is handsome, amiable, and has a fortune. She truly deserves a good husband. Yet the idea of her being married seems to me much the same as her being buried.

Youth and its scenes fade in dimness away  
While its hopes and its joys in sadness decay.

1844





[1843]

January 4th. Thurs. eve. It is four years yesterday since I commenced this journal. It seems but a day. How differently am I situated now from then. Old friends and college scenes are fading in the distance while alone and fearful I go forth into the broad world.

Shall we mourn for the friends that are scattered and gone? Shall we mourn for the joys that no more shall return?

Jan. 8. Mond. eve. This memorable anniversary is a day with events for me. I have left Mr. Livingston's office, and commenced studying at Wm. Curtis Noyes' office, 34 Wall St. Mr. Livingston felt apparently less reluctance to make the transfer than I did to announce my wishes in regard to it. He is an amiable man and I am under obligations to him, but I think I shall enjoy greater advantages where I now am. I made my appearance at the new office at 10 a.m. Mr. Noyes gave me Burrills Practice to read and Graham's Jurisdictions. Everything appears well. Mr. Noyes is a man perhaps of 40, gentlemanly and quiet in his manners, and to give my first impressions of the occupants besides him, I will begin with Mr. Marvin who is a Counsellor. He is pleasant and good natured, ill favored by nature but his voice and conversation evince such goodness of heart that all is overlooked. Mr. Williams is another employee there, I have seen very little of him during the day. He struck me as less intellectual than the other two gentlemen of whom I have already spoken, he is not 30, and has a fine flow of spirits. There was an old man of 70 there who has been writing all day and scarcely spoken or moved from his chair, except to walk to the grate and warm his hands as if the blood did not flow freely through his aged limbs. I do not know his name but I should think he was an Englishman. He is quite corpulent and looks as if he liked a glass of porter. There are three young men there about my own age. The oldest, whose name is Powers appears to be employed as a clerk, he was engaged all day





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in writing and keeps a great many papers. He appears like an intelligent and industrious person. The next in age I was not introduced to, he impressed me rather unfavorably. The youngest of the three is named Lee. He is good looking, industrious, and amiable, i.e. judging from appearances. The last person in the office that I saw today was a boy named Henry. He is small and ugly aged about 13. He is however rather humorous and seems to be quite the butt of the office.

Jan. 14th. 1844. Sun. eve. I have today listened to two sermons preached by the Rev. Dr. Cunningham who is here collecting money to build free Churches in Scotland. Will the flame of Republican Liberty ever burn on those altars. It is a little spark but if God spares my life I trust I shall see a bright flame. The Dr. is a tall large man with a large head and most intellectual phiz. Dined at Mrs. Morton's today. Am reading the 21st. book of the Illiad.

Jan. 23rd. Fri. eve. Was invited last night to a musical soirée at Mrs. Hulls' but like a clown chose to remain absent. I have rather more copying to do in my new office than is quite desirable. Things glide on pleasantly.

As all of my entries are made in the evening there is no necessity of my announcing the fact. Sunday I was at the Dutch Reform Church, corner of Fulton and William Streets. Received a letter today from N. B. Marshall, it is very pleasant to hear from an old classmate. Yesterday I saw the ship Zurich launched, it was a goodly sight. The Stripes and Stars, the Tricolor, and the cross of the Canton of Zurich floated from her rigging as she glided into the arms of her betrothed. God speed her.

Jan. 26th. Every day like the one that precedes it. Cousin Charlotte leaves tonight, or rather I have taken leave of her tonight, she goes in the morning. This or some other cause renders me low spirited tonight.





[1844]

Why has God made me as I am?

A being weak, forlorn

Who in the bitterness of grief

Doth curse the day when he was born.

Why has God made me as I am?

To walk this world alone,

And in the fulness of my heart

To look for bread, and find a stone.

Oh God! Thou are most good, most great,

Thou rulest for the best,

Then when Thy chastenings heavy fall

Teach me to feel that I am blest.

Tues. night Jan. 30th. We have had several days of the most intensely cold weather, mercury within 6 or above zero. I confine myself closely to law and have very little leisure for society, reading or any other pursuits, I lost my temper tonight for the first time in many months, and it was for a succession of trivial causes. I showed it very little if any.

Jan. 31st. Thus glides one month of 1844, forever gone, 31 of the days allotted me have passed, and I trust not unimproved. I am reading Montgomeries Lectures. Passed the evening in "brown study" and reading 225 lines at the commencement of the XXII Book of the Illiad. No poetry ever touched my feelings more sensibly than the entreaties of Priam's and his wife to Hector without the walls. Nature herself could not more aptly paint the despair and the supplications of the aged and agonized Mother than it in these lines. \* \* \* \* All the above quotation was written by my learned friend Marcus F. Hyde, who compassionating my puerile mode of writing Greek took the pen and most unintelligibly finished the quotation. However future generations will consider Hyde a great critic and scholar if he lives.





[1844]

Sunday Feb. 4th. Attended Church this afternoon at Dr. Cutler's. Yesterday finished Cruise's Digest to Vol. V. Finished Graham's Jurisdiction also. H. S. Sanford is in town.

Feb. 7th. I have done little this week, small things have given me uneasiness. H. S. Sanford was here last night at a Ball with many more of my acquaintances. I passed the night at the Epis. Seminary with my old friend J. P. Taylor. This was scene second in the drama of Boorishness.

Feb. 9th. All is dark and dreary, at times sunshine pours in upon the mind, this life is an odd compound, for a few days past, when I hoped to be most happy I have been most miserable. Why is it? I know not unless it is that I have neglected the duty which I owe to God as well as to myself.

Oh! Where have gone the happy hours!  
When all was summer sky,  
My pathway strewn with loveliest flowers,  
As hope stood smiling by.

Oh! on the wings of Time they fly,  
And o'er the trembling chord,  
Swift glides the hand of agony,  
A writhing soul is stirred.

Feb. 18th. I have attended Dr. Cutler's Church today. This afternoon three officers of her B. M.'s ship Vestal were at church. Two of them very ordinary appearing men. They are said to have been intoxicated the other night at the Native American Ball. Have not heard from home lately. Am going in debt etc. I received two handsome catalogues of the Athenaeum the other day. They were printed from the materials I left, they seemed like old friends.





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Feb. 24th. Last Tuesday I finished Cruise's Digest. I learn that the Rev. James Noyes is dead. He married a Holbrook, an Aunt of my Father's, and the families were formerly very intimate. He was a half brother of Prof. Silliman, and graduated at Yale College in 1782. I have derived much pleasure and profit from the little intercourse I have had with him. His character as a man and a clergyman combine all that was pure, amiable and lovely. He fully answered Chaucer's description of a country parson. He described to me the imposing appearance of Washington as he appeared to him (a lad) as he visited the public buildings and colleges at New Haven on his way to take command of the army at Charlestown. Mr. Noyes was at Newport with his father in law Gen. Silliman at the time the French fleet was there, and was very hospitably entertained on board of the Commandants Ship. He has at length been cut off not in the vigor of youth or in the prime of manhood, but after having far outlived his "three score and ten" and faithfully discharged his duty in every relation of life.

Feb. 25th. I have attended Dr. Cutlers Church all day, both sermons and the Act of Confirmation in the morning by Bishop Onderdonk. This prelate writes with great clearness and vigor. His sentences are short, words few and well chosen, and his style is not in the least flowery, or figurative. His figure is noble and imposing, but his delivery is too dogmatic and rapid, Mrs. Filley was confirmed. After Church I walked to the Heights opposite Governors Island.

March 2. Saturday. On the afternoon of Feb. 28th a large gun blew to pieces on board of the Princeton off Alexandria killing Judge Upshur and the Hon. Mr. Gilmer, Com. Kennon et al. It was one of those sudden and terrible calamities which appear to be sent by the Almighty to enforce the truth "that in life we are in the

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(NOTE. See Trial of Bishop Onderdonk.)





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midst of Death". Henry S. Sanford has been here for some weeks.

March 3rd. Sunday. Attended Dr. Cutler's Church in the morning. This afternoon walked over the hills south of the City with Sanford. Have read of late Dickens' Christmas Tree and Eugene Aram. I have today commenced Matilda by Eugene Sue. I find in this journal the following entry for Jan. 6th. 1840. "Have besides the regular course of studies begun "Homer's Illiad" of which I have just read 25 lines." "Not much hope of reading the XXIV Books, but I will try. I have today completed the XXIV Books, the monstrous task as it then appeared to me, I scarce dare to look back upon the long interval of four years and two months through which this neglected pleasure has been extended.

March 6th. Thursday. Yesterday I finished reading Burrill's Practice. Last evening I was invited to Mrs. Steele's to tea. I called and spent the evening there. Mrs. Steele is much distinguished as an authoress and has travelled much. Her husband is an Englishman and I entertain an instinctive aversion to Englishmen. Perhaps it is because so many of my family suffered at their hands, or because all that I have usually seen are sensual, selfish, conceited. Mrs. Steele is very thin, white, delicate and ghost-like, and strongly reminds me of my Mother. She is not as simple and engaging in her manners and conversation as Mrs. Sigourney. She appeared mild, amiable, and depressed. I think she must suffer from ill health. Her husband monopolized the conversation and talked chiefly of Liverpool, hotels, ditto beef, ditto politics. I did not converse with her sufficiently to judge in any way of her mode of thinking, or even of expressing her thoughts.

Tuesday March 12th. I have been prevented from using my eyes during the last two days. Yesterday I listened to Mr. Jordan as he summed up in the case of Van Cott vs. Van Cott. He spoke four hours and one half.





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His voice is good and his manner forcible and impressive. I have commenced Stephens on pleadings and Mitford's Chancery. Mr. and Mrs. Filley have just left our little household, I miss them much.

Good Friday April 5th. Last night a mob styling themselves "the Native Americans" were out and involved themselves in such a contest with the Irish that the militia were ordered out. A great noise was made all night.

April 12th. Friday. I have been at the office regularly this week. Yesterday I saw a classmate married, the first who has withdrawn from the bachelor list of our class. "Jas. W. Bradin". He was quite the patriarch of the class, but was only a short time at the college and passed his examinations to get a diploma. He had been a Methodist clergyman for years before and was prepared to take orders in the Episcopal Church when he graduated. Bradin was sensible and amiable.

Sunday April 21st. The past week has seen me finish Stephen's Pleadings and quaff largely of Lord Redesdale. Every evening has found me out. I was at a small party at Mr. Noyes on Wednesday night and I have called in the meantime on Mrs. Steele who writes as the English say "*cleverly*." Mrs. Peck is a kinswoman of our Connecticut Tomlinsons and a pretty Miss Taylor. My health is good, saveing a little trouble with the eyes. I attended Church in the morning, passed most of the afternoon in reading the Vth. Vol. of Sir Walter Scott's Life. I sadly miss my college friends and acquaintances and feel my taste for literary pursuits and cultivation ebbing as I attempt to thread the intricate yet attractive mazes of the law. I have no rivals to spur me on, no instructive conversations or exercises to exert their beneficial influence. Instead of that I am bored by one ignoramus after the other. For instance the quiet and comfort of this Lord's Day has been broken and put to nought as far as I am concerned by a continually talking Universalist. The dampness and cold





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have driven me from my little quarters down to the parlor. My tormentor has kept as close to me as the man that rode Sinbad. He opened his batteries immediately after breakfast on the subject of Universal Salvation. I knew the folly of wasting time to discuss the matter with him, and so informed him directly that I believed heartily and wholly in the Thirty nine Articles, that I believed neither more nor less and never should I trust at any future period. Instead of leaving me to my own reading and reflections, he has favored me with quotations, remarks, and read some time aloud, to all which edifying exertions on his part I have made the grateful return of not the slightest attention. He has just now reentered the room with the Scriptures and is engaged in hunting up some texts to hurl at my unbelief. A military funeral has just passed the house, it is a solemn soothing pageantry that teaches the old and bitter, yet oft forgotten lesson. We must go down to the grave and the skill, the strength, the pride of man must bow like reeds to the wind when the black clouds gather above. I have just been reading the extracts from Sir Walter's Diary where he speaks of the death of his wife, they are touching in the extreme for they are the simple expressions of grief, the deep heartfelt grief of an old man when the partner of life precedes him to the grave.

Monday eve. April 29th. Last Saturday I went with Chas. Chapman to Governors Island, to Hoboken and to the Academy of National Design. The day was cold and unpleasant so that I did not enjoy it much. I gave Charles my Gold Athenaeum Badge. How many recollections of college does that same badge awaken in my mind. Last evening I heard Dr. Coxe preach against Unitarianism.

May 2. Passed the evening at Mr. Noyes, crossed at the South Ferry. The leaves have come out on the trees in a most beautiful manner. Have concluded that I read too much and reflect too little upon it. My grandfather told me so when I was a small boy.





[1844]

May 8th. The first year of my law course expires to-day. I consumed my three months vacation to commence with, and from the eighth of August until today I have been constantly in the office studying.

Sat. May 18th. During the past week Mr. Noyes has been absent from the City. I have commenced Chitty's Pleadings, the great repository of legal lore. Yesterday afternoon I attended the examinations of the Supreme Court Attorneys. I should have gone to a little *pic nic* but it rained as it has done for the most of this month, which has been far more cold and unpleasant than the month of April. Last night I heard Mr. Macready play Othello. I at once pronounced him better in that character than in anything I had seen him play, but turning back I find I have recorded the same opinion in respect to his Macbeth. He is truly the greatest Tragedian of the age, and I regret that he has lived so great a share of his three score and ten.

Sat. May 25th. This week has been to me an uneventful one speaking comparatively. Tues. and Wed. I waited in the Supreme Court to hear Mr. Webster. Thurs. morning he commenced, I had a good position to see and hear him. The crowd was so great that I was forced on to the platform by the side of the Judges. Mr. Webster spoke for two and  $\frac{3}{4}$  hours. He leans back, his eyes glisten, he gesticulates moderately, but with ease and dignity, his delivery is slow and impressive, but his intellect shines forth in the clear and simple method which he presents and argues a question of law in Court.\*

Last evening as the trembling of my hand indicates was a night of (for me) dissipation. I was at a party at Mr. Woods, the eminent Counsellor. I went with Mrs. Steele and passed a pleasant evening but did not dance. I had some conversation with this eminent veteran of the profession. He inquired about my studies, told me I was reading too fast, and advised me to read Blackstone con-

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\*There was a profile sketch of him in the journal.





stantly and above all to write out for myself the meaning of all the professional terms, commit them to memory and say them over before breakfast, before sleeping at all times so that they will be accurately and indelibly engraved upon my memory. It was from such a course as this he told me that he derived the greatest benefit, and that at this day he could repeat any part of Blackstone. I have formed this and another good resolution which I pray God will give me strength to fulfill.

Thurs. May 30. I have lately finished Marshall's Life of Washington, and nearly one half of Chitty's Pleadings. It seems as if something mysterious was connected with all my approaches to Society here, sickness or death constantly intervene to prevent all renewals of social intercourse when pleasant acquaintance are once formed. Mrs. Steele's father died of the breaking of a blood vessel while I was at the party (spoken of in my last) with her. Very much to the disappointment of the friends of Mr. Van Buren, Jam. H. Polk has been nominated for the Presidency. He is a "novus homo" at the North.

Wednesday I go to Connecticut. I hope I may pass my time pleasantly there. I have some hopes of being appointed Commissioner of Deeds for Connecticut by Gov. Baldwin of that State. He is a friend of our family, and prepared in 1838 a fine obituary notice of my grandfather.

## WATERTOWN

Sunday June 16th. It is now nearly two weeks since I have had a pen in my hands. Wed. I reached Conn. On Thursday I rode over to Mr. Bellamy's with Joseph Noyes, in the afternoon I was seized with violent pain in the head and some fever and from that time until the present I have scarcely left my bed. Gov. Baldwin says that he will give me my Commission whenever I apply to him. Thus passes my three months vacation, the first





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ten days sick in bed. Heaven grant that I may spend the remainder more pleasantly. Study, poetry, reading, all my grand dreams of improvement are thus far but mere bubbles.

June 19th. Wed. morn. One year ago today and I was to have officiated as College Marshall in the reception of John Tyler at Hartford if his visit had not been prevented by the death of Mr. Legaré. Today I am *unconvalescent* of the home hospital. I have resumed the copying of grandfather's letters. It is warm today and the spirit of dullness and quiet hours seems to brood over our still little village.

Sunday June 23. Attended church all day. E. Prince and her intended husband were there. I call with Father to see them, next Wed. eve. I shall see her married at Litchfield. It is melancholy to think that this is the last evening I shall ever walk down to Mrs. Cutler's to see Elisabeth Prince. During fifteen years I have known her, as a playmate in childhood, as a boarding school Miss, and as a young lady. She is the last one that remains unmarried of the very few with whom my younger days have any endearing associations. How merrily we made the old kitchen ring with Blindmans Buff. But alas for the players, some lie low in the dust, all are scattered and gone.

Sat. June 29th. Wed. I was at E. Prince's wedding. The evening passed off very pleasantly, some sixty or seventy guests present. I was introduced to Mr. Asa Bacon who related an anecdote of Judge Edmond who sat as junior Judge when he made his first argument before the court. Several old acquaintances were there from Brooklyn, Hartford, and elsewhere. I slept very little at the hotel that night on account of the heat and noise. The next day I returned to Watertown with Mr. Prince and Charles. Yesterday I rode on horseback to Bethlehem in 55' from there I went with the ladies to Mr. Whitlock's in Southbury and in the evening I returned to Mr. Bel-





lamy's. About 9 o'clock as I sprang into the saddle my horse plunged and threw me over on the side so that I had to grasp him round the neck to avoid falling on my head. He dragged me in this way three rods when I was forced to release my hold. As I fell to the ground he sprang clear of me though his hind heels almost came in collision with my head. I was injured but slightly by the fall, though today I do not feel well. But I feel grateful to that kind Providence that rendered it no greater. I am hindered from using my eyes as much as I desire to do on account of a series of swellings of the lid since I have been sick.

Sunday July 7th. My eyes are better. The past week has passed off very quickly. Monday was devoted to letter writing. Tues. afternoon I went with Geo. Woodruff to Lake Quasapog and in the course of four hours we caught ninety fish. Thursday I attended a large Whig celebration of our National Anniversary at Woodbury. The Loco Focos held one at the same time and the crowds were numbered by thousands. Long trains of waggons came pouring over the hills in all directions with music and banners, while their passage through the street was greeted with the ringing of bells and the firing of cannon. If the stern, sober people of Connecticut yield thus to the excitement of a popular election, what fearful consequences may we not expect in future to result from similar scenes? Friday I rode to Plymouth to see Butler and Singletery of North Carolina who is rusticating there. Yesterday I made my maiden speech before a court. In the afternoon I strolled into Hemingway's tavern to listen to the Examination of Dr. Davis charged with beating his son so as to endanger his life. The prisoner requested me to act as Counsel for him, my father being on the opposite side and he having none. I did so, but proof and popular prejudice were too strong against my client. He was





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bound over to the County Court in bonds of \$100.00 which are so small that he considered it a triumph.

July 11th. Thurs. On Monday last I went on horseback to Derby where I made a very pleasant visit until yesterday when I returned. Tues. eve. I was at a party at Mrs. Sanford's. Prof. Elton is to pass a part of the day at our house.

## HARTFORD

Monday July 15th. After an absence of almost a year here I am within the precincts of my Alma Mater. I have been up to the college and seen several old friends. Nothing affected me so sensibly as to go into the old college chapel to attend evening prayers and meet none of my classmates, a thing that never before occurred. There were their names scribbled over the seats, there were the same prayers read, all was the same, in the rush of my own feelings it seemed as if I was transported back to other days, but still not one of those old faces I met so often in the recitation rooms was there. I feel more at home in Hartford than anywhere else. I have always enjoyed myself well here, and have more acquaintances here than elsewhere. I trust I shall spend a pleasant week, this has been a delightful day. The very air I inhale invigorates me. I am boarding at Mrs. Powers, with whom I boarded the last college year.

Wed. July 17th. Yesterday it rained nearly all day. I slept little or none, Monday night I was too fatigued to sleep. I have left Mrs. Powers and am now at the City Hotel, some of Mrs. P's absent boarders returned unexpectedly and occupying my room there. I passed part of last evening at Bishop Brownell's and have an invitation to be there this evening. Miss Clerc I found was out of town, called also on the Misses Drapers. I find my name recorded in the Secretary of State's office as a Commissioner to take oath and acknowledgements in the State of New York.





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Friday July 19th. City Hotel Hartford, This is my last entry in Hartford, this afternoon I leave with Butler for Watertown quite unexpectedly to myself. Yesterday evening I was at the President's party for the Senior Class. I have seen many old friends and passed a very pleasant week. My hasty departure deprives me of the pleasure of taking tea at Mrs. Trumbull's this afternoon. Her daughter is the only lady I have ever more than simply admired, yet I never met her but that I always became more awkward and stupid than usual. It seems as if Fate ordained that every impediment should be thrown in my way from some external causes whenever I have made an approach towards cultivating the acquaintance. But I have sworn that my course must be onward and turn from it I will not. "Qoud scriptum est."

Watertown Sat. July 27. Last Monday I went with Mother to Newtown. Tues. I rode to Danbury, in the afternoon I went with a number of gentlemen and ladies over into the State of New York on a horseback excursion. Wed. I returned with Dr. Wm. E. Booth to Newtown. Thursday I was detained by the rain and yesterday I returned to Watertown and brought with me Mary Booth. Today Calvin Butler and Malcolm came over and dined with me, death is written on the features of the former. Unfortunate young man, just as he has entered with some success upon his professional career he finds himself brought to the verge of the grave with an incurable disease.

Tues. July 30th. Tomorrow I leave to attend Wash. Coll. Commencement. How differently do I now regard this anniversary from what I have heretofore done.

Sun. Aug. 4. The rain prevented my leaving to attend Commencement until Thursday morning. At Plymouth I took in M. N. Butler and we made our appearance in Church just as the speaking closed. The customary dinner passed off very agreeably at the Athenaeum Hotel. After





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dinner we had a class meeting of those who were there consisting of Messrs. Clerc, Preston, J. P. Taylor, Horton, Curtis, Welles, Long, Scott, Cornwall, and Gardiner. In the evening I was at a party given by the President, after some other festivities and some serenading I retired to rest but not to sleep. The next day I returned to Watertown. The weather was intensely hot and my eyes became so much inflamed that I have to make this entry as brief as possible.

Aug. 7th. Wed. night. Vacation is becoming dull and tedious. I sigh for a little more bustle. So long as I can read and reflect time flies pleasantly, but one cannot do these two things constantly and riding on horseback constitutes my chief mental relaxation.

Sat. Aug. 17th. I am reading Blackstone and committing the definitions to memory. Wed. I went to Newtown, the next day I rode over to Zoar and went a little out of my way to see the house my Father was born in and the acres that come with it from my great great grandfather who was the Nimrod and Cortez of the hills in that vicinity rather more than a century ago. Mr. Chapman dined at our house today and says that he will have me appointed Commissioner of Deeds for Massachusetts, nous verrons.

Thurs. Aug. 22. I have just returned from Litchfield where I have been since last Tues. The Supreme Court is in Session or its circuit branch rather, which is called here the Superior Court. Chief Justice Williams on the Bench. I have listened to the arguments of some "de celebres hommes" in the profession. I was much struck both with surprise and admiration at the summing up of a cause by Lemam Church. His appearance is that of a little withered old man five feet four inches. His figure is such as I should conceive would be produced by the distortion of every joint and then suffering it to grow into a new socket when in a state of dislocation. His dress was more rusty and uncouth than even his crooked little form appeared. But when he rose to address the jury all conversation ceased





in the Court Room, people put forward their heads to catch every word that fell from his thin wrinkled lips, while the only token of intelligence that I could perceive in his countenance was the rolling of his clear blue eyes that shone in strange contrast with his black shriveled visage. All note of his personal appearance ceased when I became a listener. He spoke with due energy both of voice and gesture, but he presented the complicated questions at issue in the most masterly manner to the minds of the jury. His division of the case was clear and methodical, he evidently possessed a clear analysis in his mind while he reasoned with great logical skill and with such power that it seemed to impart the truth and that only to the minds of his listeners. His style was nervous and perspicuous but never diffuse. Here is a complimentary sketch taken from memory of our hero. Truman Smith spoke also. His action is great, every nerve and muscle appears to partake of his mental movements, he's strong but does not husband it with sufficient care, his style is diffuse and rambling, but before he closes every point is touched upon and that too in no slight or hasty manner.

Tues. Aug. 27. I have been perseveringly reading Blackstone until today. Today I have for the second time tried a cause. I appeared in behalf of the town against my former client Dr. Davis who was charged with theft from the person of one ——— Chas. B. Phelps, Sprague and one law student from Litchfield to look out references, were on the other side. I was opposed to this triumvirate and unsuccessfully so. I struggled as much as I could for my side but the magistrates did not bind him over. But alas for all my self-complacency, since I left the court I see where I might (I think now) have prevented most of the evidence that was detrimental to us from being introduced, for the reason that it was hearsay. This tells me how little I am qualified to enter the legal arena, how much I am deficient in quickness of apprehension and sharp-





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sightedness and in that legal acumen which is the result of long practice or a great mental capacity which enables the mind to embrace everything in its grasp. But I trust that I shall never again commit so gross a blunder though I cannot perceive that anybody was conscious of it at the time. May I never suffer hearsay evidence to be again introduced when I conduct a trial without my perceiving it.

Sun. night. Sept. 1st. Autumn comes with a bright and smiling face. It has been a beautiful day. May September show us many like it for I would that the few days before I write myself a man (*per legem*) might be clear and sunny like those of far off childhood now so fast fading away in the dimness of the pleasant past.

Mon. night. Sept. 2nd. I had some conversation today with a visitor of my Father's. Cap. Wilson who served through the Revolutionary War in Gen. Clinton's Brigade New York Line. Among other incidents he mentioned that he was one of the Guard that escorted Major André to the place of execution. Two American Colonels locked arms with the prisoner in this his last march, at the side of Colonel walked a minister of the Dutch Reform Church. Captain Wilson walked in the centre of the platoon immediately behind these so that he heard all the conversation that passed. They marched first through a buckwheat stubble field into an old orchard which brought them in sight of the gallows. At this André started back saying "My God! is this the way I am to die?" One of the officers told him that he "must be too well acquainted with the martial law not to be aware of the punishment that awaited him as a spy." The minister then spoke to him of the necessity of thinking of the great change that awaited him. He replied that he had thought of it as much as either of them, and that he wished that they would say nothing further to him on that subject. On reaching the spot André ascended the camp waggon, adjusted the halter





under his stock and tied the bandage over his eyes, previously taking leave of the officers and calling upon all present to take note and witness that he died like a brave man in the service of my king and my country. The provost major then gave the signal, with his sword, the camp horses moved slowly on, his feet dragged on the bottom of the waggon, caught for an instant on a halter chain, passing between the staves at the back of the waggon and then swung forward into eternity. He raised his arms which were pinioned at the elbows with what appeared to be a piece of white holland like one falling and all motion forever ceased. Capt. W. says that André was apparently about 25 with a slight and handsome figure. I have given his statement as nearly as I could in his own language, and it is undoubtedly correct as he is a man of great respectability and good sense and most likely the only surviving eye witness of that sad scene.

Wed. aft. Sept. 4th. I have just finished reading Blackstone for the third time. Tomorrow I leave for New York and my next entry will date at Brooklyn.

## BROOKLYN

Sept. 6th. Fri. night. I reached here last evening after a pleasant jaunt via the Housatonic railroad. I find myself again in the old quarters, and everything both in Brooklyn and New York going on much as usual.

Sept. 7th. Sat. I have written to Gov. Baldwin for another commission being unable to find the one that has been made out and transmitted. My classmate Brainard passed a part of the morning with me. I have studied none at all today, it seems as if the dust and ashes of the city choked me. I have passed it very unsatisfactorily.

Tues. Sept. 10th. I have today received my Commission from Gov. Baldwin. I am reading Chitty's Pleadings, 50 pages per diem and the Doctor and Student. I have resolved to read "Thier's Revolution Francaise" at Capt. Coggeshall's recommendation, who offers to loan me





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a copy of a splendid Paris edition. I am reading some of Cicero's Orations, that one for Archias I have read with the greatest pleasure.

It rains violently without while I feel miserable and cheerless. We are on the eve of a Presidential election, among the important responsibilities I incur upon attaining my majority is that of voting. It is a sacred privilege and after diligently considering the matter in my own mind I feel bound to sustain Mr. Clay. Great excitement prevails throughout the country, but I think not as much as in 1840. The country is in a more prosperous condition. Torch light processions and evening meetings are of almost constant occurrence.

Sat. eve. Sept. 28th. There is a violent storm without, the weather is extremely cold for this season. The mercury in Fahrt. therm. at 53 but a good fire in my room renders it quite cheerful. This is the last evening of my minority. I know not why it is but I look forward to that anniversary which renders me twenty one with sad misgivings for the future. A birthday is with me a day consecrated to meditation, vain regrets, and good resolves and none have presented themselves where meditations upon the past and unyielding resolves for the future are so needed as upon that which tomorrow ushers in. I cannot conceive how any reasonable creature can spend in thoughtless merriment a day that tells us our life lease is shortening, our talents buried and we ourselves weak and weary plunging into the dread future.

Sept. 29th. I am today 21 years of age. Childhood and youth have ceased to be and henceforth by the law of the land I write myself a man. How bitterly do I regret the errors of the past. How sorrowfully do I dwell on the recollection of departed years. How stern are my resolves for the future. It seems as if the elements conspired to render this sad anniversary still more gloomy, such a storm





as rarely visited our coast is raging without, which I trust is not typical of my future career.

Wed. night. Oct. 2nd. I am reading "Coningsby" by the author of "Venetia". It is one of the few novels I read. One of those that I must rank with "Corinne" and "Eugene Aram" in the impressions they make on me. The characters are well sustained especially the Eton Boys, it bears upon its face the mystic stamp of a great and cultivated genius. A boat excursion on the river yesterday and a sad headache today have interfered with the law recently.

Tues. Oct. 8th. Have been since dinner at Gowanus on an unsuccessful shooting excursion. I have led a leisurely life for the last few days in order to dissipate a fixed pain in the chest. At noon I listened to the Valedictorian at the Col. College Commencement. His piece was in poetry so that it had none of the usually touching effect of a Valedictory. Yesterday I called on Mrs. Butters. She bears the loss of her husband better than I expected she could. Poor fellow he reached Demarara but to die there. I find he wished the copy of Rabelais to be given to me if he did not return.\*

Fri. eve. Oct. 18th. For the last two days my eyes have been inflamed. Yesterday morning I passed in the Vice Chancellor's Court. I heard Benj. F. Butler on the Cruger case. In the afternoon I attended the Fair of the American Institute. This day I have spent in the Superior Court. The storm without and the blues within put me in a rhyming mood.

There was a time when all was bright.

A summer sky serene,

Hope shed her soft inspiring light,

And Fancy crowned the scene:

But Oh the change! the bitter change!

Dark clouds obscure that sky,

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\*NOTE. Rabelais would certainly be a good antidote.





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And all my thoughts mid sorrows range  
While not one friend is nigh.

Bright were my dreams in Learning's Halls,  
And at her shrine I knelt,  
But sainted sleep within those walls  
The hopes that there have dwelt,  
And lone my course along the way  
That cheerlessly I tread  
No kindly voice that bids me stay  
Save "halt! among the dead."

Oh who will mourn when I am gone,  
Or stay to drop one tear,  
Of sorrow on that cold, cold stone  
Unfeeling hands may rear?  
True I shall sleep and know it not,  
Then why should I repine  
That none will come to bless the spot,  
The spot I may call mine.

Sunday Oct. 20th. This morning attended the French Church. I have resumed reading "The Prairie Bird" an Englishman's imitation of Cooper. I do not think it is entitled to the praise I have heard bestowed upon it. It wants originality.

Oct. 23. Wed. Last Evening I was at a little party at Milles. Robert, quite a mixture of French and English were present. The excitement which usually precedes a Presidential Election is greater now than I have ever known it. There is almost uninterrupted series of bell ringing, cannon firing, and processions. I ardently desire Mr. Clay's success, but make no public demonstration of my wishes. I progress slowly with the law. I have too many irons in the fire, though they are all literary. My former fondness for novel-reading seems to revive, but I find it is too alluring a relaxation. Within a few weeks I





have read "Coningsby", "Prairie Bird" and "Arrah Niel".

Wed. Oct. 30. I have today done little else than attend the Whig gathering in New York. I had a fine view of it as it came up Broadway from a window on the corner of Trinity Churchyard. One man near me counted the horses, he said there were 2,528 of them, another counted the men in the procession, and according to his estimate there were about 9,500 in it, and probably ten times that number spectators. The time consumed by the procession in passing where I was standing was 2 hours and 50 minutes. Every window as far as the eye could reach up Broadway was filled with heads and waving handkerchiefs. The most striking feature was the number of ornamental platforms drawn by horses with artisans of every kind working on them.

I have received through the kindness of Mrs. Steele an invitation to a small party at Miss Peck's, but I send a note declining it more from the growing unsociality of my habits than for any other reason. I daily perceive that I am growing indolent and even when perceiving am too torpid to arouse myself from it. I have today received a letter from my classmate N. B. Marshall, by it I learn that he with the Kers is at the Medical College in Philadelphia.

Sun. Nov. 3. Thursday I went to the Bowery Theatre to see Putnam which has had a great run for the last three months. It is a mass of trash and bombast and taken as a whole it is supremely ridiculous. I have suffered from a severe toothache and I am now suffering from a remedy worse than the disease, that is killing the nerve with arsenic. This morning attended the French Church.

Nov. 8. Thurs. A bleak unpleasant day. I voted yesterday for the first time. It is one of those important steps which should be recorded in this journal of my life, steps which alas serve only to mark a journey from infancy to





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the tomb. I cast my maiden vote for Henry Clay because I believed that in so doing I was voting to sustain those principles and that Constitution which every American is bound to, and which my brave and virtuous grandfather sustained with his blood on the field of battle, and with the wisdom of his maturer years in the Counsel Chamber of the nation. God grant that I may be like him. Brave, wise and good.

Sat. Nov. 10. The vote of this state has gone against Mr. Clay. There is little or no hope of his election to the Presidency. It is a matter to be deeply regretted that after a life spent in the public service of the country, he cannot descend into the grave crowned with this last honor. Nothing can equal the grief and disappointment of the Whigs. Many even of those who apparently have taken but little interest in his Election, have shed tears upon hearing the unexpected result. And all parties express their sorrow for Mr. Clay. On Monday night I am to speak against my own belief in justifying the execution of Louis XVI. But some one must take the weak side of the question or we would have no debates.

Nov. 16. Sat. night. I have been out most of the day with Mr. Filley shooting in the woods near Greenswood Cemetary. We had very good sport considering the locality, among other things we shot one grey squirrel. I have rarely passed a day more pleasantly. It was one of those unclouded, warm, beautiful days, such as autumn occasionally gives us, as it were to render us more sensitive to its fogs and its chills. The air was pure and bracing and the very inhaling it was a pleasure. Though I have walked some fifteen miles and am much fatigued as well as suffering from blistered feet yet I must confess that I have not passed a day as pleasantly for a long, long, time. Monday I commenced Story's Equity. I find the style pleasing, the arrangement of the subject clear and analytical and great learning shown in the notes and authorities.





Wed. Nov. 20. Called this evening on Miss Howland, found there a copy of a poem written two years since in Hartford by a young lady to a friend of mine. I have just completed the tenth and last volume of Thier's *Revolutions Francaise*. I commenced reading it Sept. 13.

Fri. Nov. 22. Last evening I was at a soiree musicale at Mrs. Hull's. The music was fine, much of it Italian. It required a better judge than myself to appreciate it. I met there two female authoresses, Mrs. Steele, with whom I am acquainted, and Mrs. Emma C. Embury. The latter had a very pretty daughter who sang well and made, though quite young, an extremely graceful appearance.

Sun. Nov. 24. Attended the French Church in the morning, Mr. Johnson's this afternoon. I have engaged to write a lecture for the Hamilton Association to be delivered in a few weeks. I have chosen for my subject the Knights of Malta, and am now reading Constable's History or I should say, his edition of Sutherland's History of that distinguished order.

Wed. 27th. Nov. Have read very little law for the past two days. I called today on Miss Barnard, but I must say Mrs. Thompson, for she has married a gentleman of that name since I left Hartford. She was absent, I found, on a visit to Hartford. I then called on Mrs. Butters and Starr and then at the Seminary. I searched in vain for some books relating to the Knights of Malta at the Library.

*A La Belle Inconnue.*

"Ma belle inconnue," 'tis to thee,  
 A stranger writes "*Adieu*."  
 Much fears he lest you think it rude.  
 Oh pardon, hear him through.  
 Alone where strangers worship God.  
 Friendless he knelt to pray  
 When lo! A light upon his path  
 Shed its benignant ray.





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But you, fair lady were the light,  
Your softly, mild blue eyes,  
Made in the stranger's cheerless heart,  
Visions of Beauty rise.

He thought, oh then! Of other days,  
But they Alas! are fled,  
He thought of kindred and of friends,  
But they sleep with the dead.

And then he asked "Oh can it be,  
The Ladye with the graceful mien,  
Will cast one little thought on me  
When I no more am seen?"

Then when he leaves perchance for aye  
May he not write to you,  
These feeble words, these lingering lines,  
Of his long, long *Adieu*.

Nov. 28th. Thursday. This is Thanksgiving Day in Connecticut. They are all of the Connecticut stock where I board, so that we have quite a Thanksgiving here in the precincts of the Empire State. Went with Mr. Burt to see an inquest taken before a Sheriff's Jury. Mr. Burt is quite obliging to me, and takes frequent opportunities to afford me instruction and information and especially in matters of practice. He has been in the office but a few months, and is considered rather crabbed but from some cause he treats me with marked regard. Acres, a young Englishman, employed as a clerk at the office was severely wounded by being stabbed in the back part of his head on the night of the Loco precession; he convalesced for a few days but is now in the Hospital raving mad.

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The Loco Focos were a schism within the Republican or Anti-Whig party which originated between 1832-1836. Their demand was sound money, free trade and non-interference by Government which eventually became the platform of the Democratic party.

Their name arose from a circumstance in New York, when the regular Republicans tried to stampede an evening meeting and put out the lights, the equal rights people were prepared with Loco Foco matches and candles and continued their debate.





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*Thanksgiving Day.* Thursday Dec. 12. This anniversary brings with it our first snow storm. Who can tell under what circumstances the occurrence of this Festival will find him in the ensuing year? Joyful or sad, well, sick, or dead. Mr. Taylor has invited me to dine with him and Mr. and Mrs. Childs where I expect to pass the day very pleasantly.

Sat. Dec. 16th. I have for more than twenty-four hours suffered from an uninterrupted headache. I am reading Classical Essays, Correspondence and Lectures by the German Philologists, translated and collected in a volume entitled "Classical Studies."

Sun. Dec. 17th. I heard a sermon from Bishop Hopkins of Vermont this morning. The subject was "brotherly love being the love of God." His appearance is quite bishop like, with his large round frame, and florid complexion. He presented the subject with a great deal of clearness, his figures were few, chaste, and scriptural, in action he was composed and dignified, his voice seems weak, but naturally good enough if he tried to turn it to less purpose, this is the only fault I observed.

This afternoon I listened to a sermon from Bishop Lee of Delaware. The subject was "the Gospel of Jesus Christ." At the commencement of his discourses his voice had an unpleasant nasal twang, but it soon subsided as he became warmed in the subject. He displayed a classical taste and cultivated mind in his style, while he arranged his thoughts in an easy, harmonious manner that rendered his sermon a model of pulpit perspicuity. In action he was quite energetic using many gestures. But his emaciated frame and ashy complexion told more of the study and the "midnight oil" than of old Madeira and Episcopal dinners. This evening I intend to hear Bishop Johns of Virginia.

I have this moment returned from hearing Bishop Johns preach. His sermon was upon the weakness and





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depravity of the human heart. It was delivered extemporaneously and in a most interesting and eloquent manner. His voice has a slight lisp which seems in him to be a beauty. He manages it extremely well, his whispers being heard through the Church with perfect distinctness, while he seemed in some portions of his discourse to surpass Macready in the perfection of his delivery. In personal appearance he is prepossessing, tall, lean, and iron features with a huge mouth, make him seem to the stranger, a John Knox, but when he rises to speak, his kindling eye, his modest exordium, and then his impassioned eloquence and unceasing yet dignified action fill the mind first with interest and then with admiration.

I have today listened to three bishops and with the utmost pleasure.

*Christmas Day.* I have passed the day at Mr. Marvin's. Attended St. Peter's Church with him in the morning. I spent the day very pleasantly. Mr. Hyde and the two Mr. Powers' dined also at Mr. M's. The return of this Festival finds me in health and the enjoyment of many blessings, may God in kindness continue them unto me. How much have I to be grateful for. With the New Year may I commence a new life.

Fri. Dec. 27. There has been a violent snow storm from the northeast. It still continues. I have not been at the office but have remained at my room reading and writing upon the Lecture. I have just finished reading Hecuba with Mr. Hyde. Like the other writing of Euripides it flows with the wisdom of Socrates. The change from pathos to a pithy saying seems often too abrupt, yet it has a pleasing effect.

Sat. Dec. 28th. Read fifty pages in Story's Equity Pleadings. Received fifty cents the first fee I ever received as Commissioner for Connecticut. This evening I devote to my Lecture.

Sun. Dec. 29th. Attended the French Church this morning. Written letters to N. B. Marshall and N. M.





Butler. During the past week I have made slow progress in almost everything. My lecture drags along.

Tuesday December 31st. This is my last entry under the year 1844. During its flight I have learnt how to taste both of the bitter and the sweet. As I review it, and ask myself "have I become holier and wiser than I was before?" I see but too distinctly, how much, I have neglected my best interests. I have today completed Story on Equity Pleadings. Good night! to the Past Year.

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The winds are hushed, the waves are still,  
 And yet my heart beats quick and fast.  
 I see the bark, the trade winds fill  
 The snow white sail, but to the past  
 I turn my sad and weary heart  
 And count the sweet, departed days  
 When ne'er I dreamed from thee to part  
 Regina of my earliest lays.

And at thy side another stands  
 Upon the gently gliding deck,  
 Who at the altar clasped they hands  
 And swore to cherish and protect  
 Thee as his loved and honored wife.  
 Well is he worth the noble heart  
 You pledged to him yestereve for life  
 But how it rends my heart to part.

Oh! Could I once again recall  
 The pleasant, pleasant hours,  
 When life was young and hope was high,  
 And nought was e'er but love and flowers,  
 But why repine, bright hopes are thine,  
 The wide, wide world before thee lies,  
 And he you love, and she above  
 Guard you for aye near other skies.





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(Age 22 years!)

New Year's Eve. 1845. Fatigued and weary with the festivities of the day, I commence a new volume of the records of my quiet life. A new year is dawning before me, it may be for weal or for woe, but God grant that it may be unto me, one of holiness, health, happiness, and wisdom. During the day I have made Twenty eight calls, visiting most of my friends both in New York and Brooklyn. A few of them I found agreeable, but many of them were merely formal, and where I have not called since last New Year's. I will here transcribe the rules by which I have so long endeavored to regulate my conduct.

1st. To be temperate in all things.

2nd. To always show a becoming respect for Religion and the Clergy.

3rd. Never to surpass the limits of strict Truth.

4th. Never to speak ill of another.

5th. To treat all persons with politeness.

6th. To shun the habit of swearing.

7th. Each night to review the day, and ask God's blessing.

8th. To always read these Rules, after writing in this Journal.

1845. Tuesday Jan. 7th. It has rained most of the day, and I have remained at my room. Until dinner I was engaged upon my lecture, since then I have been very much interested in reading the manuscript journal of Mrs. Whistler, the wife of Major Whistler, an American officer now in the service of the Emperor of Russia as an Engineer. It bears upon its face the evidence that it is the production of an extremely amiable, intelligent and pious lady. She relates every incident in a simple and interesting manner. It gives me much clearer ideas of life in St. Petersburg than I could possibly derive from any other source.

Wednesday. January 8th. I have this moment ceased listening to Ole Bull. A mere accident brought me there





as I was not aware that he was to perform in Brooklyn. The "Siciliano E Tarantella" and "The Carnival of Venice" delighted me, and though I have so little knowledge of music as not to recognize "Yankee Doodle" when he played it this evening after being encored, yet I have rarely passed an evening of more exquisite pleasure. The pleasure I derive from music is from the pleasing emotions it excites in my mind, and the beautiful and heart stirring pictures it causes my imagination to call up. At one time tonight the music came floating and undulating as from a vast distance, and unconsciously I was thinking of a bright summer afternoon, when long years ago, brother Henry and myself while passing a week at our Grandfather's, sat fishing from the rocks on the shore of a neighboring lake and heard music borne on the wind across its surface, and were at a loss to discover the source from whence it came. I was only aroused from this dream of other days by finding myself borne on to realizing, for the first time M De Stael's description of the singing in the Sistine Chapel.

"Non me carminibus vincet nec Thracius Orpheus,  
"Nec Linus."

Sunday, 12th. This morning I attended the French service. Yesterday I visited some of my old college friends who are at the Theological Seminary. Thursday I was presented to General Mirabeau Lamar and Commodore Moore of Texas. Gen. Lamar is about fifty, middle sized, and with a florid complexion. His manners are prepossessing, exhibiting all the ease and politeness of a Frenchman. Commodore Moore is younger, rather ill-favored and has a sinister expression in his countenance.

Saturday, January 25th. Last evening I attended the Opera of Cenerentola, the first time I have ever attended an opera. I was charmed with the music, and earnestly desired that I knew Italian so as to understand the words. The audience presented a brilliant display of wealth and





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fashion perhaps more than is usually collected in New York. It was over before 11 o'clock. Last week on Friday I was at a small party at Mrs. Steele's. The evening passed very pleasantly.

Wednesday, January 29th. Last night I listened to a Temperance Lecture from young Gough. He is a very popular Lecturer, though but little educated, he has a glowing imagination, and a natural rude eloquence, that render his discourses very attractive. This morning John Horsley Palmer, late President of the Bank of England, called at the office. This eminent Capitalist and M. P. is on a visit to this country to settle some financial operations. He is a complete John Bull in external appearance, fat, florid, with large features, a deep rolling voice.

Saturday, Feb. 15th. The snow is rapidly thawing. I have completed my Lecture. St. Valentine's day has showered some unexpected favor on me. For the life of me I cannot tell where they come from, but they are approximately from one source, and that where I am well known.

Wednesday Evening, February 26th. I have this moment finished the delivery of my Lecture before the Hamilton Lit. Association on the Knights of Malta. The audience was very small, most of them personal friends of my own. I have reason to believe it was well received and I trust considered creditable to myself. Mr. Prince and his brother were there, they were the companions of my Father in his youth, and I suppose they felt some curiosity and interest respecting the son. "*Sed tu desine plura puer.*"

Sunday, March 2nd. This morning I listened to a discourse from the Rev. Antoine Verren, in French. His manner is slow, calm, and dignified. This Church was originally established by the French Huguenots. This afternoon I heard a Mr. Chapin at the Universalist Church. He preached in a style that is extremely popular and attractive. Mr. and Mrs. Morton arrived yesterday from Cuba much benefited in health by their travelling. Mrs. Chapman is here preparatory to the marriage of Charlotte.





Thursday, March 6th. Today I have commenced the study of the Italian language. I can however make but little progress until I have more books and an instructor. Since the mornings have become more pleasant I walk regularly upon the Battery. The fresh air is most invigorating, and I need its sanitary influences.

GOOD FRIDAY, March 22nd. The two first cases I have had in New York were to be tried this morning before one of the Assistant Justices and I was not aware until near dinner time that it was one of the Solemn days of the Church that I was thus spending so differently from all former ones. My cases I found had been settled. Thus ends my first litigation *ici*. On the 29th, I finished reading the Revised Statutes and such Private Acts as appear entitled to notice. Frederick Cornwall called on me the other day; he is married, the second one of our class who has entered into the Holy State. I was present last evening at the first party I have attended in many months, at Mrs. Peck's. Passed the evening pleasantly, met there Miss Beers.

Friday, March 28th. I have today commenced reading "Chitty on Contracts," having just finished "Costar vs Lorillard 14 Wendell vs James 16 Wend." These cases are of the utmost importance as settling and defining the Law of Real Estate under the Revised Statutes. For after dinner amusement and instruction I read "*un' poco di Le Favole del La Fontaine tradotte in versi italienne da Stephano Egidio Petrony.*" During the past week almost every evening has been passed in visiting. I have been making amends for a winter's negligence. Tonight I am going over to New York to call on Mrs. Thompson and Mr. Samuel A. Foote, an old friend of my Father's who has extended to me several courteous invitations, none of which I have as yet accepted.

Tuesday, April 1st. Walked for an hour this morning upon the Battery. Read fifty pages in Chitty, wrote a little at the office. Dined at half past three. Read a little





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Italian. Walked out to Fort Greene. Read the Quarterly Review for an hour. This is my ordinary complement of exercise, study and relaxation. I have received a letter from my old friend, M. N. Butler, written in his warmest vein of humour and kindness. It is pleasant to receive a memorial of this kind, especially in the selfishness and capacity of a large town, that comes fresh and warm hearted from a dweller and a friend amidst one's native hills. I have attempted no rhymes of late, and I have never read but very little poetry, and when I compare my meagre miserable productions with those of true poets, I resolve to blot them out of existence, yet it is gratifying to read over my old college effusions for "auld lang syne."

Saturday, April 6th. Attended the French Church this morning. This evening I have run through a novel termed "Self Devotion." It is the harmless offspring of a female mind. "My Lord" and "Lady" with all the clap trap of titular distinction etc. are of course presented and the closing scene, a trial, in an English Court, is a perfect legal farce. The last week has been warm and sunny, but today brings us a slight fall of snow.

Wednesday, April 16th. Sunday last I visited Uncle Robert. Yesterday went with Filey, Lee and Ordrinaux, fellow students, on a little excursion to Staten Island. Have of late in consequence of the weak state of my eyes frequented the Courts. Heard David Graham and Mr. Attorney Whiting sum up in the trial of Mrs. Bodine for murder. Passed last evening with Mr. Coggeshall; was introduced to a lady, Mrs. Lee, recently from Europe, a resident of Geneva. She invited me to her house whenever I chanced on a trip to Niagara. Other occupations have forced me for a few days to neglect Italian, but this evening I shall make up for some lost time. My Father tells me he is a member of the Lower House and Cutler of the Senate this spring. Their joint influence, if delicacy permitted, would obtain for me the post of Clerk of the Senate.





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Wednesday, April 23rd. I have passed almost every evening at home for the last three weeks. Have reached the 3rd Book of the "Favole Del La Fontaine." Still reading "Chitty on Contracts." Next Tuesday evening Miss Charlotte Chapman\* is to be married. I shall endeavor to be present.

Friday, April 25th. Tomorrow night I intend leaving for Derby in a small steam propeller, but a stiff gale is springing up from the Northeast that threatens detention. Spring renders the gardens around us one beautiful bouquet. Pear trees have been in bloom for some days.

Monday, April 28th. Yesterday morning attended Mr. Vinton's Church. In the afternoon I heard a sermon by Dr. Field, Lord Bishop of Newfoundland. It was a simple, clear, and classical discourse; I have rarely listened to one with more attention. The Bishop is a tall, noble looking man; as he stood by the altar in his robes, I thought only of an old Roman hewn out of granite. I did not sit near enough to observe well his profile but I will attempt something; this does him gross injustice and is so wretched a failure that I shall make no experiments of the same kind in future.

Thursday, May 1st. Tuesday last I left at 7 A. M. with a number of gentlemen to attend Cousin Charlotte's wedding. We arrived in Hartford at 3 P. M. My visit to Hartford though brief was very agreeable.

Friday, May 2nd. I have today finished reading "Chitty on Contracts." I shall now devote a few days to a general review of "Pleadings and Practice." Priest passed last evening with me, Mr. C. Prince part of this. Examined today the oldest records in King's County Clerk's office extending back to 1685.

Tuesday, May 13th. The most exciting race that has ever been in this country, came off this afternoon between Fashion and Peytona, otherwise the North and the South,

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\*The mother of Mrs. John Buckingham married Mr. Samuel McLean of Brooklyn.





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for \$20,000. All New York has been out there, and throngs of persons and carriages are passing under the windows as they return. A Mr. Berrie from Canada, three children, and Governess, on their way to England, have been tarrying at Miss Hayt's. He is a friend of Lockhart's, and a well educated, highly respectable and wealthy man going home to receive a fortune, and make a tour with his family upon the Continent. He is utterly different from the (soi disant) English gentleman that so often appears in this mercantile community.

Tuesday, May 27th. Yesterday and today have been passed in the Supreme Court listening to the arguments in the case of Norton vs Roy. After remaining in the heated room five or six hours, I walked out into the Park a short distance from the City Hall to breathe the fresh air, when I was startled by the report of a heavily loaded pistol at my side. At the same instant I saw the hat fly from the head of a man a few paces from where I was standing and his form at the same time sink into the grass. As I proceeded to him I remarked to an elderly gentleman "There is a man who has shot himself," but he only replied by an incredulous look. When I reached him I found the skull torn away about one inch over the right eye and small portions of blood and brain scattered over his face, bosom and scarf. He was an extremely fine looking man about eight and twenty and very genteely clothed. A partner of Benjamin F. Butler's recognized him as a lawyer by the name of Wilson. He was dead before I reached him. "*Iam te premet nox, fabulaeque manes*".

Sunday, June 1st. The young lawyer referred to in my last entry was a talented Scotchman who became discouraged by his ill success in the outset of professional life. He left a wife and family to the charities of his brethren at the Bar. During the past week I have reviewed my studies. Yesterday I took a trip to Clifton with John Ordinaux. Have commenced reading Keightley's Greece.





## WATERTOWN

Thursday, June 12th. Yesterday morning I left New York at half past six A. M. and reached home at 5 P. M. We came to New Haven on board of the Traveller, a new boat and making her first trip. I whiled away a good portion of time in reading a novel by the mulatto, Alexandre Dumas. May he live to show the world that a man may be a man though his skin is stained by African blood. In the stage we had the charming little wife of a Naval Officer, who honored me with the custody of a huge bouquet that she was bringing from Newport. She was as artless as a child, and in truth was almost a child in years; yet she said that her husband had been for many months on the Brazil station. I was much interested in observing her emotion and delight at meeting her Father. My Mother appears in very good health for her. My father is at the Legislature.

Saturday, June 14th. Yesterday afternoon I went on a very successful fishing excursion to the neighboring lake with George Woodruff. This morning I read the Edinburgh Review. Have just received a call from my old chum, Frisbie. I expect my Father will return from Hartford this afternoon where he has been attending the Session of the Legislature for the last six weeks.

Thursday, June 19th. My time passes very quietly and very agreeably. Having recently read "Keightly's Greek History," I feel anxious to study that more thoroughly from the fountain heads if possible. I have an old folio copy of Thucydides that belonged to my Grandfather's Library, and "Xenophontis Historia Graeca" which I had but did not read at College. I have formed the habit of reading a chapter in the latter part of every morning and then a little Italian. My life is now one of perfect ease and leisure. Sometimes I exercise in the garden and occasionally on horseback but most of the time I pass in reading.





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Friday, July 4th. The rain which has continued for the last three days has now ceased, and this morning of our national anniversary which commences the seventieth year of our National Independence, is one of the brightest and fairest that an unclouded sky and a July sun can afford. Save the flags on the hickory and ash-poles, and the roaring of cannon far away among the distant hills, there is nothing to indicate the nature of the day. The spirit of Sleepy Hollow broods over everything. Since writing the above I have been to Plymouth to visit Friend Butler. When four miles from here while riding my horse at full speed, he stumbled, throwing me full ten feet over his head; fortunately I escaped injury. I ran the gauntlet between two cannon on some portion of the road. One discharge was right behind me, some ten yards, and my horse plunged so violently that I then nearly again lost my seat. Rev. Mr. Richardson passed the evening with us.

Friday, July 11th. Monday assisted Father in trying the case of Attwood vs Estate of Mr. Hawkins. The same day Mr. and Mrs. Morton and Mr. and Mrs. Filly came to our house with Miss Wooster. The next day we all went to Quasapog on a fishing excursion where we met General Wooster and Lady and some others. The day was passed most delightfully. We caught an abundance of fish so that we were supplied with a good and substantial *picnic* dinner. At evening we all parted, well sunburned, and well pleased with the day's sport, each going a different road, our kinsfolk leaving for Humphrysville intending to go to New York the next day. Yesterday I was again at the lake. This entry comprises the most pleasant week as yet of my vacation. Perhaps, however, I merely think so because I am in unusually good humor this morning.

Sunday, July 13th. On Tuesday, Deus Volens, I intend starting on a trip for the North with Malcolm Butler. I trust at that time the heat will be less.





[1845]

*(Journey to Whitehall and Lake George is omitted as it is all guide book stuff. The only interest lies in its being made with a horse. My father loved to employ the art of description. I think he would have enjoyed a literary career but probably his imagination was not sufficient.)*

Tuesday, July 22. After a night of martyrdom from numerous little foes, we commenced our journey at sunrise. We passed over Fishkill Creek which arrested by its swollen waters the retreat of Gen. Burgoyne, and saw the old Schuyler mansion and the heights where the final encampment was made. We then followed the road which he took in his march and subsequent retreat. We were shown the battle ground on Bemus Heights and the ruins of the house to which, when wounded, the gallant Fraser was carried. Our good fortune caused us to meet an old gentleman who politely explained the affair to us. This gentleman was nine years old at the time and lives near the battle ground. His father commanded a company of Minute men, and he gave us some interesting details of the state of things at that time. "Whenever the Indians, or the Tories who were much worse, made an incursion," said our informant, "The alarm was given and I have seen this road crowded with the Minute men hurrying up to Old Phil Schuyler's. I always rode up behind my father so as to bring the horse back."

Passing through Stillwater and Waterford we dined at Troy. The two last are large and well built towns. In the afternoon we rode through Greenbush to Castleton where we passed the night. Greenbush is a miserable, dirty hole. On our ride we saw many beautiful seats, particularly the Van Renssalaer. Old Gov. Clinton's residence presented a shabby appearance in the meadows bordering upon the river.

Friday, Aug. 1. Yesterday Cousins James and Joseph Noyes called, and I have spent the morning at the lake with Joseph. They have now left.





[1845]

Sunday, Aug. 3. Last evening news came of the sudden death of Judge Butler. Today I go with my Father to attend the funeral. Tomorrow I leave for Hartford.

Monday, Aug. 4. Hartford. Left home at 7 A. M.; rode with Father to Waterbury. Called on Mrs. Sarah Morton and saw divers old acquaintances. Left at half past eight in a crowded stage and reached Meriden at half past eleven. At half past twelve P. M. started in the cars for Hartford. Saw some old college friends on board of them. Called after dinner on Mrs. Chapman and Mrs. Powers. Attended prayers at the College Chapel. After tea called at Mrs. Trumbull's and found the family all absent. Passed the evening at Bishop Brownell's.

Tuesday, August 5. This has been a very hot day. I lay awake half the night from the fumes of green tea which I drank by mistake. Called on Mr. Bradley and Mrs. Powers before dinner, then on the Misses Sheldon, and at Gov. Ellsworth's. After tea called on Mrs. Sigourney whom I found confined by illness, and after that at Misses Draper's and Bishop Brownell's.

Wednesday, Aug. 6. In the morning attended a meeting of the Alumni. Afternoon listened to Oration of Rev. Mr. Morgan and Poem of Rev. Mr. Everest. Took tea at Gov. Ellsworth's and accompanied the young ladies to the Laying of the Corner Stone of the new college, and to Junior Exhibition.

Thursday, Aug. 7. Attended meeting of the Athenaeum and Alumni in the morning. After the Commencement exercises dined with the Alumni. In the afternoon I was initiated into the O. B. K. In the evening partook of a supper with many old college friends.

Friday, Aug. 8th. Left Hartford in company with Cousin Charles Chapman. We walked from Plymouth Hollow to Watertown, which we reached about 10 P. M.

Thursday, Aug. 21. Charles Chapman left this morning. The past ten days have been consumed by us in fishing, shooting, riding, etc. My books and journal have been





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entirely laid aside. This day is a painful anniversary in our family. It is nine years since my brother Henry died.

Tuesday, September 2. The time of my departure is drawing near. The last few days I have been in no mood for reading or studying. Fishing and running over the chapters of some good and more silly novels have been my most intellectual pursuits.

Saturday, September 6. My eyes weak. Father is reading the Political History of New York to me, and when amusement fails from this source, I wander about the woods with a fowling-piece, but am rarely guilty of any slaughter.

*New York*

Monday, Sept. 15. I have been at the office this morning for the first time. The noise is perfectly stunning. I find myself sighing for the tranquility of the country.

Thursday, Sept. 18. Have been reading Longfellow's "Voices of the Night." His poems are very excellent. The thoughts and the rhythm are striking and beautiful.

October 2, Thursday. I have just returned from Uncle Robert's where I went yesterday. I passed the morning in shooting on the Uplands with John Jay Livingston, whose niece my Uncle espoused.

*New York*

Sunday, Oct. 19, 1845. I have again changed my residence. Yesterday I commenced boarding with the Rev. C. H. Williamson, Pastor of a French Church. I trust that by spring I shall be able to converse in the language and to write it correctly.

Saturday, Nov. 15. M. Boquet was at tea this evening. He is in the City studying English and delivering lectures in French to his countrymen. His lectures are upon France and its religious condition. As a Catholic clergyman he received the dying breath of the late Duc D'Orleans and he is now an avowed advocate of the Protestant faith. I passed most of the evening at Misses Roberts. The con-





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versation commenced in French but flagged so soon on my part that we betook ourselves to English.

Sunday, November 23. Rain this morning but now, 6 P. M., clear and cold. This morning I attended Mr. Verren's Church. Yesterday I visited with John Ordri-  
naux Trinity Cemetery, the Croton Bridge, and Harlem. Wm. P. Lee, one of the most agreeable students with Mr. Noyes, has left for another office. During the past week I have made some progress in French by the aid of Signor Secchi, a young Italian, who boards with us and speaks French well, and with whom I walk every morning upon the Battery.

Dec. 13, Saturday Eve. Thursday night went with Powers to hear Mr. Kean and Lady in Ion. Her personification of the latter character was perfection itself. Yesterday I received a letter from my old chum, Frisbie, and another from James Phelps.

Christmas Day, 1845. I have been perusing my Christmas commentaries for the past five years and my skeleton of a journal is a source of considerable pleasure to me. My whole time is at the present devoted to the acquisition of French and Law. Yesterday I finished *Graham's Practice*. I shall pass the day *chez moi*. I should like much to spend the day with my friends in Connecticut, but that I fear will be a pleasure long denied me. This Festival of the Church reminds me of the many favors and blessings for which I have to thank God.

New Year's Eve. 1846. I find myself weary and worn after having made thirty four calls during the day in New York and Brooklyn, and in no condition of body or mind to review the past, or resolve for the future, so thanking God for his past kindnesses and mercies and praying that they may be continued to me in future I seek my pillow.

Wednesday, January 7. Yesterday I obtained an order from Judge Ulshoeffer for examination as attorney of the Court of Common Pleas; he appointed examiners and I





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passed my examination in the afternoon, which was merely formal, and this morning I appeared in Court, took the Oath, and signed the Roll, and henceforth I may consider myself an Attorney.

Sunday, January 11. Last evening I heard Kean in Richard 3rd, and his wife as Queen of Edward Fourth. It was the first time I had ever heard it played; in some parts he did not equal my anticipations, but on the whole I derived a great deal of pleasure from it. Mrs. Kean played her part admirably. The scene where she takes leave of her children in the Tower was truly affecting. I thought of the wonderful genius. How truly "he was not for a day but for all time." There are Homer, and Shakespeare, who stand on the dizzy height with the mists of ages rolling all around them; they have touched chords that will vibrate sweet music as long as man exists; there let them stand forever to receive the homage of all time.

Sunday, March 29. The weeks fly fast. The Battery is green, and the sun shines warm and pleasant. I have commenced reading "Conklin's Treatise upon the Practice of the United States Courts."

Sunday, April 5. The past week has been clear and sunny. Yesterday the Rev. Dr. Totten called at the office and informed me that I was appointed to the Masters' Oration at the approaching Commencement. The idea of going back after a three years' absence, and making a college speech, seems quite a retrograde movement.

Friday Evening April 17. Last week on Friday I quit for Connecticut. It was very cold and rained and snowed most of the time. Tuesday I went with my Father to Litchfield, and that afternoon I was admitted by a Resolution of the Bar Attorney and Counsellor for all the Courts of Connecticut. In the morning I received my Certificate and took the Oath in open Court. Yesterday I returned to New York, and today I have been engaged in making some arrangements for my future course. I have taken an office





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adjoining that of Mr. Merrill for \$62.50 per annum of George Griswold.

Sunday, April 26. I have been studying "Burrill's Practice" very attentively during the past week. Have read a little French, and passed most of the evenings in Society.

Sunday, May 10. It has rained every moment this week and is still pouring. I have studied some and worked a good deal for little pay. This Examination for which I am unprepared hangs over me like a cloud. My next entry will announce the result.

Saturday, May 16. On Thursday afternoon we were examined and I passed through without the slightest difficulty. Mr. Charles O'Connor and Mr. H. Spencer examined me, the first on Bills of Exceptions and writs of Error, the latter upon Replevin. Nine out of the class of ninety were rejected, amongst them a colored man, now rejected for the fourth time on the ground of deficiency in qualifications. Yesterday I subscribed the roll and took the Oath in open Court. Three years from this time I shall be admitted Counsellor; during those three years what will come of me and my little journal?

Sunday, May 24. Thursday I attended the consecration of Trinity Church. The music was good and the spectacle magnificent. Two hundred and fifty clergymen in their robes with the Bishop, knelt around the altar at the same time. No scene was ever more impressive. I have perfected my first judgment during the past week.

Friday, June 5. I am now writing in my own office under my own fig tree, and a lawyer, *un avocat*. Wednesday I was admitted a Solicitor and Counsellor of the Court of Chancery, and the same day a Counsellor of the Court of Common Pleas. My Father has been here for the past few days. Monday we drove to Uncle Robert's. Yesterday while decomposing from the excessive heat, we had our daguerreotypes taken. My Father had designed go-





ing to Washington but the heat was so great that this morning he hastened home.

Friday, June 26. Nothing to do; business dull; if things are not better I shall emigrate to Texas.

Saturday, July 4. It has rained all night and still rains; the Battery is filled with troops. All looks dull and dreary. I must endeavor to make some progress today with my Master's Oration.

Monday, August 3. Saturday my old school and college friend, Tracy, called to see me; he is a lawyer in Chicago. I dined with him at the Astor. In the evening we went to Niblo's; afterwards we adjourned to Hotel Delmonico. Next Friday I deliver my Master's Oration.

Friday, August 21. Yesterday I returned from Connecticut. Left home at 7 A. M. and reached New York at 6 P. M. Cousin Charles Chapman, who has been at our house since Commencement came down in the boat with me. My Oration went off better than I anticipated, for I was aware that it was rather a crude affair.

I passed one week very agreeably at Hartford and the other at home, riding, fishing, etc. It is just ten years today since my brother Henry died; how bright and how beautiful were those days of our childhood when we journeyed on together.

Wednesday, Sept. 16. The weather changed suddenly yesterday and it is now quite cool and pleasant, for the first time this month. I have commenced reading Spanish and English with a Spanish gentleman for the purpose of mutual improvement in each other's language. I think I will study the grammar and learn to speak it for it is spoken a good deal at my boarding house. My business is so slight that I have considerable vacant time. I am reading *Cicero de Oratore* and Greenlief on Evidence.

Wednesday, Sept. 23. Monday afternoon I accompanied my friend Smith or Smidt, as his Dutch ancestors wrote it, to Nyack. This was my first trip up the Hudson,





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and as it was delightful September afternoon, and my friend perfectly familiar with all the *Lions* upon the route, I enjoyed it very much. As we approached Tarrytown he pointed out to me the beautiful country seat of Paulding and the roof of Irving's Gothic cottage just peeping up from the dense foliage of the surrounding trees. Sleepy Hollow was pointed out as just above the village, but it was fast becoming too obscure to discover even the shadows of the valleys, and a few moments found us *en route* for the residence of my friend. Opening a gate we followed a carriage-way that soon showed us the top of his house emerging from the trees and shrubbery, and the hearty barking of a large Newfoundland dog announced our arrival. The next morning I visited the old Dutch stone tavern in Tappan where Major Andre was confined, and saw the room, or rather the traces of it, for it is now enlarged into a dancing room. Near by is the Church which stands upon the site of the one in which Andre was tried, and a short distance back from the river rises a hill, crowned with a peach orchard, upon the summit of which Andre was executed. The old stone tavern has been there, and used as such beyond the memory of man. Old Mr. Bogart, now 95 years of age, says that it was an old building when he was a boy. Two hundred yards from there is an old brick farmhouse with the figures 1700 in front, formed by the insertion of bricks of a different color from the rest. This building was occupied by Gen. Washington as his headquarters. The mistress of the house very politely received us, and showed us the room occupied by Gen. Washington, with its glass cupboard in the corner which she says has remained unchanged during this long interval. There is something still beautiful in the heavy oak timbers of its ceiling and the numerous tiles which decorate the fireplace. After taking a fine drive through the country I left at One P. M., and found myself after a delightful trip down the river, at three o'clock in New York.





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Wednesday, Nov. 11. It has rained continually for the last two weeks. Yesterday I tried my first case in Common Pleas; got beat, as I expected to. I do nothing but sit in my office; for the last few days I have neglected my Spanish very much.

Monday evening, Dec. 7. A terrible day, storm, snow, and sleet. Poor Mrs. Morton died yesterday at a quarter past five a. m. and was buried this afternoon at half past two in Greenwood Cemetery. She was generous, and warm-hearted by nature, and in religion a most sincere and devout Christian.

Sunday, Dec. 13. Mr. Peter Morton died today at two o'clock. I went there to dine, as he had expressed a wish that I should renew my old custom which had been broken off for some time in consequence of Mrs. Morton's illness. I found the family very much engrossed with his rapid declension, and I dined at Mr. Filley's. We had scarcely finished dinner when the news came that Mr. Morton was worse. We hurried to the house but found him dead. He died without a struggle, and has never suffered any severe pain.

Christmas, Saturday, Dec. 26, 1846.

I dined yesterday at Mr. Taylor's where I met old Mr. Goodwin, a former friend of Grandfather Edmond. I passed the day very pleasantly.

New Year's 1847. I have passed this festival as usual making more than thirty calls some of them very agreeable. In the evening I was at a small party at Mr. Foote's where I met Prof. Davies who politely invited me to his house. Too fatigued to sleep, I retired at 12.

Monday, March 1. The first day of spring comes with a high, disagreeable wind. Have this day been admitted Attorney and Counsellor in the Kings Co. Common Pleas.

Wednesday, March 24. My first cause was called for trial today and passed by the Judge at a long cause. In a few days I quit my quarters at Brooklyn. My Aunt leaves





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for Connecticut, and I have availed myself of a newspaper advertisement to avoid running around for a lodging room. My health and business continue as usual. My charges amount to something, but I am so unhappy as not to collect much.

Saturday, April 10. Time flies with tremendous rapidity, weeks fly like days. Glorious news comes to us from the seat of war. Last week we heard of the victory of Buena Vista. Today every flag in the city is flying in honor of the capture of Vera Cruz and the Castle of San Juan D'Ullua.

Friday, April 16. This evening I am going to the New Opera. A large Italian troupe has arrived from Havana and seem to make a good sensation.

Wednesday, April 21. Last evening I was at the theatre. Mrs. Mason played Marianna in *The Wife*. Was not as much pleased with her acting as I had anticipated.

May 1. It is just one year ago today since I commenced the practice of law & nailed up my shingle. I have succeeded better than I anticipated, and hope that I shall be able to make enough from my business to defray all of my expenses for the next year. The following is my pecuniary statement for the past year.

Personal Expenses .....	\$700.78
Total of charges fees etc. for past year.....	\$1288.55
Of this amount collected .....	506.00
	<hr/>
	782.55
Of this last amount doubtful.....	162.00
	<hr/>
	620.55
Of this remainder perfectly bad & hopeless .....	79.00
	<hr/>
Good and now due .....	\$541.55





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### Estimates for Ensuing Year.

Rent of Office etc. Books, Law Institute Share.....	\$200.00
Board and washing average \$6.00 per week.....	312.00
Clothes.....et ceteras.....	200.00
Contingencies .....	100.00
	<hr/>
	\$812.00

To meet this outlay I have due for old business...	541.55
I shall derive from business now in hand.....	300.00
	<hr/>
	\$841.55

May 10, 1847, Monday. I have attended today at the Kings Co. Circuit. It is excessively hot. Saturday, I removed my lodgings to M. Pelerin Hotel.

Sunday, May 30. The evening of the 26th, I accompanied my friend and fellow-student or rather my student to Cold Spring in Suffolk Counry. That evening I attended a large party at Mr. Jones. I was presented to various handsome ladies and stout men. Among others I scraped the acquaintance of Mr. Churchill C. Cambreling, who is quite distinguished as a politician. The evening passed off delightfully. Beauty, music, dancing, and champagne, conspired to gratify the tastes of all. The next day we fished, walked about the neighboring country, and before six o'clock the morning after, were en route by steamboat for New York. The loveliness of the morning, the enchanting freshness and beauty of the adjacent shores and the conversation of the charming Miss D——, gave a zest to steamboat travelling on Long Island Sound that was altogether new to me.

Wednesday, July 7. I have just returned from Watertown whither I went on the 2nd inst. I have visited my friends there, caught a few perch, and for a brief interval escaped the heat and bustle of this great *Baliel*.

Wednesday, September 29. 1847. I am twenty-four years of age today. On the 24th, I went to Hartford and now *en route* for New York with my head full of Miss——





[1847]

Thursday, October 28. Last evening I called on Miss ..... at the Astor House. Today I have engaged to go with her to the monument room of Trinity. I am gradually improving in health. The weather is excessively cold. Day before yesterday I was at Uncle Robert's. I found him extremely weak and pale. Poor man, he has suffered severely and it pained me to see him with his wooden leg. I find the presence in town of Miss ..... quite unfits me for business. *Elle est jolie amiable, et je l'aime comme je n'ai jamais aimé une femme.*

Thursday, November 11. My business is the great monopolizer of all my time and thoughts. Not all of my thoughts, for the accomplished, pretty, amiable and in all respects most lovely Miss ..... runs in my head continually. Last night I dreamed of her four times, so that I find she is the subject of my sleeping as well as of my waking thoughts. Never woman has so touched this cold heart of mine. *Oh Dieu aye pitie de moi et donne que nous vivions ensemble.*

Thursday, December 23. I returned last night from Hartford, from what I fear to be most certain indications, *toutes mes esperances, si cheries sont evanouies à jamais.* I have seen many of my friends, and had it not been for a cruel disappointment, I should have passed my time very agreeably. On the evening of the 9th of this month, I was initiated a member of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows. To divert my mind from dwelling on a most painful subject, I shall work, toil, and strive in the arena of my profession as I have never heretofore done. The future, boundless, glorious, is before me, and struggling with every energy of soul and body, I carve my destiny.

Christmas Day, 1847. I am engaged to dine at Mr. Taylor's where I dined last Christmas. I have been looking over my journal, and find that I am now pursuing an enterprise that I commenced in boyhood.





[1847]

(Letter from Mrs. Holbrook Curtis to her son.)

WATERTOWN, December 28<sup>th</sup> 1847

Dear William,

As this is the only letter I have received from you during a number of years,\* I lay aside all engagements to answer it. You remark Christmas was a dull day with you, It snowed here, but did not prevent your Father's return at Evening from Litchfield. He left on Monday in a Waggon, intending to be here at New Year. These seasons my dear Son, bring to mind many of the scenes through which I have passed. Nearly 25 years were spent under my Father's roof, free from care and sorrow, my greatest unhappiness was a frail constitution, more so than any member of the family. Owing to this circumstance, I had resolved on a single life, but your Father told me he had a Competence for the present. I believed I should be treated with respect and kindness. Without flattery, I can say to you he was a man of fair reputation, and I was induced to come here. My Parents were becoming aged, I had Brothers and Sister unprovided for, and I considered it my pleasure and duty. I would advise young persons to be married and settled as early in life as convenient. Professional men are often obliged to wait until 30 or thereabouts. All things considered I should prefer 25. At that period our habits are formed, our former associates leave the list and we look about for sympathy in vain, unless we have secured a partner in our joys and sorrows. I would never invite a lady to leave her Father's house unless I knew my own habits. She should have my Heart and its best affections. It should be my constant endeavor to have her life pass pleasantly. There is enough of sorrow mingled in the cup without a Husband's adding thereto. He should be her Guide and counsellor on all occasions. Do not expect perfection here below. A sensible Woman,

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\*He always wrote "My dear parents"—





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and I am sure you would select no other, would be happy in knowing you were so, in making your Home an Earthly Paradise, when perhaps the writer of these few lines, addressed by affection, should be added to the list of those already gone. In a few months I shall have completed half a Century. My Sun is going down, while yours is rising. To you we now look for Sympathy, and protection. According to the common course of events, we may not be spared together many days or years. It therefore behooves us to enjoy the present rationally, and of course agreeably. Henry would have been 23, Elizabeth 14. I have ever felt deeply their loss, and shall continue to, as old age advances.

Your Father has enjoyed fine health many years, but is now beginning to grow old. On his account particularly, I desire you to endeavor to add to his Happiness, as it will contribute to yours also. My Health, although better, keeps me within doors during Winter, and in your Father's absence, were it not for my Housekeeping, I should be lonely, although we have frequent calls.

While my Parents lived, a visit to them afforded more pleasure than anything else. Since their death, I have visited Newtown but once, as I did not wish to be under obligation to Dr. Booth. Where a person can occasionally mix with refined society it is desirable, as a means of improvement. Where mind meets mind, our *Ideas*, if we have any are drawn out, and not smothered for want of room. If you had always lived here you would find this a great drawback. When you are disposed you can read or converse with intelligent persons. I hope you will have enough of wealth to afford you leisure sufficient. As we have resided here so long, we are unfit to live anywhere else, the rust of 20 years can never be rubbed off. Our friends if *we have any* will take us just as we are, not what we should like to be. We have cause for Gratitude to our Heavenly Father for your restoration to Health, for the many privileges we enjoy, both temporal and spiritual. By





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living in New York we are deprived of your society, but what is our loss, will be your gain. I have written thus far with but three interruptions, so you must excuse all errors. Mr. Mallory has just called to invite me there with Dr. Holcomb this Evening. You will say "how glad I am for Mother began to write and forgot to leave off. I shall not send her another letter till the New Year arrives and let her write all through, until it returns." Your Father said he would write you from Litchfield. After wishing you years of Happiness, and every earthly good, I remain your Affectionate Mother,

Elizabeth Curtis.

Watertown, Decem. 28th, 1847.

Journal W. E. C.

Tuesday, February 22. Washington's Birthday. I am quite busy and in good health. It is a wild and stormy day, but the winter has thus far been the mildest I have ever known. I was at Uncle Robert's on Saturday. I did not see him but found that he has so far regained his strength and health as to be able to visit his patients. This information gave me the greatest pleasure, as when I saw him last, I feared for his ultimate recovery. A mass meeting is called today to nominate Gen. Taylor for the Presidency. Monday I went home and yesterday morning I left there for this city, whither I arrived last evening much refreshed in body and mind by my brief but pleasant journey.

Monday, March 6th, 1848. I have today received a letter from my Father informing me of the death of Malcolm N. Butler. This intelligence fills me with affliction. He has been for many years one of my dearest and most cherished friends. At school, at College, as students, at the bar, I have long known and loved him. He was my companion at home, and in most of my sporting excursions.

Friday, April 28th. Tomorrow I intend to move to Number 54 Wall Street. This is the last quiet evening that





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I am to pass in this little room where I commenced my professional career. May I in future succeed, ever being grateful to the kind friends who have kindly assisted me thus far with advice, funds, and business.

(Letter from Holbrook Curtis to his son William)

WATERTOWN 26th May 1848

WILLIAM E. CURTIS ESQ.

Wall Street No. 54

New York

DEAR WILLIAM

The wit of an Englishman, they say, always comes when the occasion for it is past, it is but too apt to be so with me. When I was in New Haven Mr. Seymour told me his wife was going to New York, I told him you were going down, he said if you would take charge of Mrs. Seymour he thought he should not go. I entirely forgot to mention it to you, which I much regretted, Mrs. Seymour has had the misfortune to lose her voice, can speak only in a whisper, but is a fine good woman & house keeper & has been very polite to me when at Litchfield, as I have taken Tea there in two or three instances, and I never had any opportunity of making my acknowledgements but by removing her husband from being Clerk of the Court. The Superior Court was in session when I was at New York & I corresponded with Mr S who took care of what little business I had & Mrs Seymour took quite an interest in your sickness. If you made her acquaintance in going down so far as to justify it, I wish you would just call on her, and show some little civility to her, she is probably with her brother Woodruff. If you have not made her acquaintance, little matter.

Our Legislature is in a row about our Senators, after the passage of the resolution appointing Baldwin & Smith by the House of Representatives, when we were then on the motion of a Member on Monday — a motion was made





to ask a return of the resolutions to the House of Representatives, proposed by Senate which was carried, & they were returned where they now are & the business I understood was accompanied with much confusion & disorder, and has elicited much feeling. Our relative and friend Chapman is in the whirlwind, voting for the most part with the Loco Focos, and has call'd forth so much indignation from the Whigs, that unless his feelings are somewhat tough they will probably be wounded from the many arrows to which they are exposed.

I came home the same afternoon you left from New Haven, your Mother has been somewhat complaining from over work in cleaning the house for summer, but is again mending. I am short of money at this time or I would come to New York & buy some few things we need for family use. I suppose you have taken quarters at Staten Island, the weather has not been hot here since Sunday, but has been very wet. I think perhaps during the hot weather you had best not confine yourself too much to your office. Will you not be expos'd to disease in your passages to & from Staten Island from the quarantine ground? I am confident that with prudence you have constitution enough to avoid other disease than Epidemic during the summer. Mr. Morrell told me he had never been sick in New York, though he had a frail constitution, if you have complaint or constant headache I think you had best take a trip up here or into the Country somewhere unless your passages between N. Y. & Staten Isld should dispell it . . . . As it regards the \$100 towards purchasing the lot of Books you mention. My ability to do it with convenience without impairing my Principal, must depend upon contingencies.

I do not think our Connecticut Whiggery very stable in any respect. The accessions we have from Loco Focoism from time to time rather weaken than increase our strength. I think men constituted like our friend Chapman do best





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in the ranks of the Loco Focos, he is rather a handsome speaker, but that is of little use without discretion & judgment, with the Locos extravagance & innovations were not out of place.

I suppose the French boarders at Pelerines consider their country regenerated, and all our Citizens seem to rejoice in their support. I remember something & have heard more of the old Grand Revolution. Although France is much improved since that time, has a much greater number of Freeholders, and the impression of the past. I fear that from their universal suffrage, Communism, Socialism & Grulyism, the old Sans Culotts will have too much influence to permit the Tree of Liberty to bear much Fruit.

It yet remains a problem whether any people are capable of self government. Our own Republic is yet young, but the cause of Liberty has received many shocks during its existence and although I sympathize strongly with all persons who wish to be free, I have less confidence than many that the cause of Liberty will be much promoted in Europe, by the present excitement on the subject. That it may never cease to exist here, which our Country & People wish, is my first wish & prayer, but since the first framing of our Constitution we have been becoming more Jacobinical, If I may be allowed the expression. Universal suffrage, electing Judges by the people, for a limited time, no qualifications required for the practice of law or medicine. Foreigners admitted to the Election before they have had time to become acquainted with our Constitution.— All these things would have frightened the Framers of our Constitution who meant to establish a representative Republic & not a pure Democracy, they intended that we should have something to gain or lose by the stability or instability of our Government & that the Judiciary should be independent of the consensus of Popular Opinion. I hope public improvement has been such





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that we may safely endure the alterations and changes to which we have been subjected. I think there is a Conservative power in New England on which we may rely for many years. But I somewhat doubt whether the stability of many parts of our Country is to be relied on. It is however best to look on the bright side of things, I hope for the best. Recollecting our duties to God & our Country & ourselves, to the last of which we are impelled by the first law of nature, that of self preservation, all emotions on that line so far as I am concern'd must soon be over, 61 years almost I have seen, yet I have enjoyed as much health and as much otherwise as most persons. I ought to be content to look to the balance of life as a state of indolence when not much enjoyment can be had, if with my present experience I could pass it again it seems as though I could mend it much, but that would not be desireable. That you live longer, enjoy more, profit more by early experience in which you have had better opportunity than myself, perform the duties of life better, is among my first desires and aspirations and it is a consolation when leaving the stage that we reflect that we leave behind us some substitute that can perform his part better than we have done.

Affectionately

H. Curtis

Post script by Mrs. Holbrook Curtis.

If there is as near a fit to your person in the articles you mention, as I discovered by the representation of your letter, to the original, you ought not to complain. I perceive you have genius for drawing — although your talents have slept “uncultivated, unhonoured and unsung.” Wonder whether they are hereditary. O Gotham! We were astonished, this is truly an age of invention. If you had spent Sabbath at Home instead of returning, I think you might have enjoyed yourself. We are moving on much as usual — I wrote you a long letter 4 months since, which you never answered and now tell me you cannot answer





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my lengthy and frequent epistles — *probably being so much occupied you had forgotten it.* E. C.

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Saturday, May 29. On the 18th. I went to New Haven, met my father there at 4 p. m. I went to Hartford, took tea with my kinsfolks and the same evening I returned to New Haven. Yesterday morning I visited the mineralogical Cabinet with Mr. Thos. R. Dutton, and passed the remainder of the morning at the State House where I witnessed the election of Messrs. Baldwin and Smith to the position of United States Senators. In the afternoon I returned to New York.

(*Excerpts*) letter from Judge Holbrook Curtis

WATERTOWN June 2<sup>d</sup> /48

. . . . We had thought of coming to New York. I suppos<sup>d</sup> possible I could loan the money on mortg<sup>e</sup> security then at 7 per cent<sup>m</sup>. And I wish<sup>d</sup> to invest somewhat for the family. But your mother thinks we cant afford it & she is not prepar<sup>d</sup>, and not well enough &c, &c, and I think perhaps we might use so much of our money as to be oblig<sup>d</sup> to depend on the Int. without any principal. I had intended to go abroad this summer, but conclude my *doom* is to tarry at Watertown what time I have to stay and that I may as well make up my mind to it, but if you go to Canada let me know when you will go, and I will be govern<sup>d</sup> by circumstances. It must be healthy and comfortable in New York. Yesterday the thermometer stood at 45° and it is an ill wind which blows good to no one . . . .

WATERTOWN Wednesday

Dear William,

June 14th /48

Your last letter was so much saturated with inflamed eyes, & Small Pox, that we felt considerable anxiety about you, which has been much increas'd from the fact that we





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have not heard from you for almost a fortnight. If you are sick, so much so, as to be unable to write, and yet you understand a letter from reading or having it read, we would be happy to hear from you by some other hand so as to know whether you are in want, in peril, or need our cares. I have been wishing to go to New York, but have been dissuaded by your Mother, who thinks you may be absent, but I see not why on that account I should be less liable to hear from you.

The Weather has been for a week past, cold to a degree almost unprecedented with us, for the longest days in the Year, thermometer ranging from 45° to 50. It is now 11 oclock 52, the wind has been so high as to prevent much Frost, Yet nothing grows in a garden but Bugs, Weeds and Cutworms, Yet the weather is very favorable to things out of door, not dependent directly on the Earth for sustenance, as Cattle and horses, which appear to be in prime condition. Our Legislature continues in session, and will I am told for some two weeks to come, The Rail Roads I am told will occupy a great portion of their time. The Nomination of General Taylor for Pres<sup>t</sup> by the Whigs, will I think breed some dissention in their Ranks, perhaps however they will gain as much as they will lose, for my own part I know Not much of General Taylor, but the objections made to him that he has never shewn his hand, or given a statement of his Creed with regard to the great principles maintain'd by the Whigs (recommends him to my favour). Our Demagogues explain too much, & those whose principles hang most loosely about them are ready to adopt any principle which they think will best sustain them with the people, whether they believe it or not, & thus attempt to raise themselves on other Men's shoulders. Gen<sup>l</sup> Taylor says "Gentlemen here I am, Vote for me or Not as you choose, My Life is before you, let it speak for itself." Yet I think there is some doubt whether the gain will be sufficient to make up for his loss.





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Your Mother is very well indeed, as I am likewise and the health of the place with the exception of the measles is very fair. You can have your \$100 now if you want it or wait until I get it from other sources in July. I shall not come to N Y<sup>k</sup> until I hear from you. I think if the weather is hot or oppressive, You had best come home & stay awhile, here is gardening, fishing, riding, shooting, and good air, and those are of more value than all New York taken together. If health is den'd you where you are, and there is any chance to retain it here, leave all & come home at once, for life is worth but little without health.

Affectionately & C

Holbrook Curtis

Wednesday, June 14, 1848. On Monday last, I heard Senator Benton in company with several other distinguished Senators and gentlemen speak in the Park before an immense assemblage of several thousands. Their political adherents constituted but a small part of the assemblage, curiosity attracting the greater portion. The personal appearance of Benton is striking. His finely formed head, Norman nose, and frizzed iron grey locks straggling over his high forehead, with a bright, clear expressive eye would have impressed a perfect stranger with feelings of interest and respect. There was a trace of sagacity and the wily politician at times developed in the lines and expression of his face while speaking. He is 66 years of age and is fast verging to the descending stairs of life. His style in speaking is not very good, or rather his voice and manner, yet on the whole there was a clearness and force that pleased me. His metaphors were bold and powerful, but never simply beautiful.

Senator Allen of Ohio who succeeded him has the qualities of a popular orator finely developed, with a stentorian voice, a piercing eye, expressive countenance, and a warm imagination, united to a great deal of action. His man-





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ner, style, and delivery, riveted the attention of many thousands.

Senator Houston told anecdotes, and spoke with the ease, adroitness of a stump orator and political veteran. His person is commanding and noble, but in conversation he was excessively profane. The other Senators exhibited little that was profound or remarkable. Never have the political lists opened for a presidential tilt with forces so shattered and disorganized as at present. As for myself, I am at heart a Barnburner, and believe and follow after the teachings of John Van Buren.

Wednesday, August 2. I went to Hartford to Commencement. Stayed at Mrs. C's house. I heard an oration by Mr. Barnard of Albany before the Convocation, and a poem by Dr. Croswell of Boston, was pleased with neither. Passed a part of the evening at Mr. Joseph Trumbull's.

Thursday, August 3. Attended meeting of convocation, also a part of Commencement exercises, and dined at Mr. Trumbull's. Rode out in the afternoon. Attended a supper of the I. K. A., met some old friends, rather too convivial for nowadays.

Note — Here are some excerpts from his father's letters at this time —

WATERTOWN Sept<sup>r</sup> 11<sup>th</sup> 1848 Monday

. . . my fault in early life was to charge nothing, to decline business from want of assurance if it seem<sup>d</sup> complex, not having sufficient reliance on myself. if I were to commence again I would, before engaging in business, ascertain from whom my pay was to come, tell my Client as well as I could what I thought of his case, if there was a chance, & then go ahead, regardless of difficulties, taking such Fees as the law & the Rules of the Bar authoriz<sup>d</sup>. the pleasantest business a lawyer ever does is to argue cases when accustom<sup>d</sup> to it. I know the commencement is difficult to obtain particularly in New York but it is when





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once commenc<sup>d</sup>, easy to go ahead, and the facility is constantly increasing. if therefore any young man just beginning should have a case he is willing you should argue, do it for nothing if you can make no better terms, it will tell in future, but do not overwork yourself, remembering that action & reaction are mutual. On the whole you have gone along better than I anticipated. I have seen some young men who have left N York for want of business . .

(*Excerpts*)

WATERTOWN Sept 17th 1848

I am Judge of the C C<sup>t</sup> for Litchfield County, as well as the C<sup>t</sup> of Probate for the District of Watertown and Town Clerk. The latter office I shall decline and I presume the two former I shall be relieved of by the Legislature next spring. The Free Soil ticket in Conn<sup>t</sup>. will be sustained principally at the expense of the Whigs. It will include all the Abolitionists, the discontented who wish to ride into distinction by mounting some hobby, who are generally among the Whigs. It is possible though not probable they may draw off enough to give the state to Cass. The truth is that, what renders General Taylor exceptionable to the scum which rises on the top when the Political Pot boils, to those who love to fish in troubled waters, and live on Spoils, is his declaration that he wishes to be the President of the Country, & not of a Party,—to the Politicians whose worth must be tried in the Crucible of merit. From all I have heard of General Taylor, I think him an honorable, frank, high-minded soldier, above the small things which unfortunately are calculated to make a candidate for Pres<sup>t</sup>. go down with the Mob and the Office Seekers, but very unacquainted with the duties of the Office of Pres<sup>t</sup>. he writes well, must have read much, but ought not to have been a Candidate. Mr. Van Buren, an experienced Politician, is the man who under all circumstances keeps cool. His presence of mind is like that of Fred<sup>k</sup> 2<sup>d</sup>, but I have thought he had much of Sir Robert Walpole





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about him, and I confess his present position has lead me to ascribe to him qualities which I did not before suppose him possessed of, for I had thought that he neither loved or hated, but like a Jesuit looked only to the end without regarding the means, believing every man had his price and that all were dishonest; but has he not something of what Tacitus apply<sup>d</sup> to Tiberius and which Junius quotes as applicable to Sir W<sup>m</sup> Draper? (Latin quotation) and does he now wish to return the stab he rec<sup>d</sup> when Polk was nominated Pres<sup>t</sup>, perhaps he wishes to do his Country Service and I have altogether mistaken his character, one thing is true of him, (Van Buren) that to do what he has done he must possess great Mental power, for without advantages of family or education, for many years he was the most influential man in N Y<sup>k</sup>; his political enemies whom he always in person treated civilly but struck fatally when he could, were powerful and he often foil<sup>d</sup> them all. On the whole, he is an uncommon man, and when he saw himself superceded by such a nobody as Polk, it would be a curiosity to know what those latent feelings of his were, which no man was ever acquainted with. Gen<sup>l</sup> Cass I had form<sup>d</sup> rather a good opinion of until since he came from France and has been in the Senate, he seems to be for War and Conquest of all North America, Texas, Oregon to 54.40 & Mexico & the British dominions. I think he will be a dangerous Pres<sup>t</sup> if elected (I fear he may be), to be consistent he must carry out his views express<sup>d</sup> so often the last few years. I am told too he is a selfish rascal, having by his position and management possess<sup>d</sup> himself of much of our new lands of the greatest value, his acquaintance with civil matters and life is much greater than Gen<sup>l</sup> Taylors, & he is a man of more talent than Polk or John Tyler.

I am too old to embark in politics. A man who is about to leave the world should loose the ligaments which bind him to it. You are young & if





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you have health, ought in any small way you are able, if it be but slight, to do your Country Service; honestly, let what will, happen, & though you see ever so many from selfish motives sustaining the Cause of dishonour let it not influence you. The (Latin for clear conscience) will ever be a sufficient satisfaction for disappointment, want of success want of office and a minority. The pages of History show us that the best men have not been always successful. A character like that of J<sup>n</sup> Jay in public life is worth more than any office in the gift of the people, but the temptation is so strong to be with the Majority that many of our young men seek not what is right but the place where they suppose the spoils will be kept. The Old Federal Party is now a name for all things wrong in politics, but it was the only *honest* party I ever knew. Men then liv<sup>d</sup> who lov<sup>d</sup>, as Lord Mansfield said of himself, that popularity which follow<sup>d</sup> not that which was run after. Such men as Oliver Ellsworth, Roger Griswold, Chauncey Goodrich, Frederick Wolcott, Grandfather Edmond &c, have pass<sup>d</sup> away with their white topp<sup>d</sup> boots white stockings & small cloathes. The only remaining specimen I know of is David Daggett of New Haven. His mental powers are gone, but to see one of those men, as I have, who once knew them, is worth a long pilgrimage. The men who established our Independance and assisted in the formation of our Constitution were finally outvoted by those who oppos<sup>d</sup> the latter measures, and nobly gave up the work of their hands (by which we now live & breathe & have our being) to unworthy successors. I have said much of little value, on a subject which occupies little of my attention. I am happy that the weather is better for your Mothers ride in an open waggon than I anticipated. it is now 12 & has rain<sup>d</sup> very little.

Affectionately,

H Curtis





[1848]

Monday, November 6. Just before leaving for Albany, I received a letter from my Father announcing the death of our old and much valued friend Mr. Belamy, the last of a name of a good English stock. He was at college with my Father, and for almost forty years they have been in practice at the bar in the same county. He was a high minded, upright man, and possessed the esteem and confidence of all who knew him.

Friday, November 10. General Taylor is chosen President, by one of those vast majorities, that show that he is the choice of the nation, and not of a party. I voted for the nomination of the Barnburners,\* but am content with the result of the present election; though I should much have preferred to have seen the presidential office filled by a man pledged to oppose the passage of slavery across the Rio Grande. This is almost the first election in which I have taken interest, and I believe I am at heart more.....

*(Excerpts from letter of Holbrook Curtis)*

WATERTOWN Friday 10<sup>th</sup> Nov<sup>r</sup> 1848

Dear William.

I regret you suffer the small cares of business so to prey upon your sensitive system, but I know what it is, & how foolish it is although I was the victim of it the greater part of my life, & probably might have been wealthy & better known had I not been so great a fool, as to avoid business, to free myself from more serious cares, but a young lawyer, must ever look to the good time coming. Your political debut, if you were looking for office, was not remarkably opportune. However I suppose you are not so strongly committed but that you can hurrah for Taylor, I think if I have no extra expenses, I shall be able to live hereafter for about \$800 per annum. It will probably cost you as

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\*The Barn Burners followed Van Buren, a split in the Democratic party who were willing, like the Dutchman who burned his barn, to lose everything if they could not gain their point—the right of new States and territories to decide for themselves on questions of slavery etc





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much as that, which here would be a large sum to raise from business. I suppose when you get all your business in full sail under the new Code, it will do itself. As I have the impression it was establish<sup>d</sup> to enable every man to be his own lawyer, and it would be a pity if regular built lawyers could not get along with it, as well as Tailors & Blacksmiths. It has ever been a great ambition to settle the troubles & controversies of life with-out the aid of lawyers, but little progress has ever been made. Your new system I know not much of, you require the Testimony in a Chancery case to be taken ~~in~~ writing.

I wish you would see when my paper runs out & renew it paying them the \$5, which I will remit to you as well as money for envelopes if you send some.

Greely on the whole has considerable talent, though too much an Agrarian. I intend if the weather be warmer to go to Bethlehem tomorrow. It may perhaps if you should live any number of years be fortunate that you learnt something of the old English Practice as I think those who come after cannot know much of it, and it may be necessary sometimes to have something to fall back upon. . . . give my regards to all relatives and inquiring friends, particularly remember me to my Dear little Charlotte McLean & her husband as well as to Charles Chapman as there are few relics of our family. I hope you may be useful to him, remembering that as his Senior he has a right to look to you for Examples of prudent correct & dignified Conduct & manners, as well as for additional information & improvement. . . .

WATERTOWN Sabbath Afternoon Nov<sup>r</sup> 29th /48  
. . . . Old M<sup>r</sup> Bacon & his wife are worth \$200,000., have no child but Frank and a grand child living who represents a deceas<sup>d</sup> son. if the old gentleman calls on you be sure always to treat him with some civility. The old Aristocracy of Connecticut are pass<sup>d</sup> away, some slight





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mementos remain in some of our older men, and however much we may talk of *Democracy* there was an elevation of soul about that class of men not found in our degenerate days. . . . .

WATERTOWN Sunday 3<sup>d</sup> Dec<sup>r</sup> /48

. . . . . M<sup>rs</sup> Mallery returned from N York where she had been a few days something like a week since, she confirm<sup>d</sup> what I had before heard in two or three instances, that I was about to have a daughter in law. After a repetition of the story several times M<sup>r</sup> Goodwin mention<sup>d</sup> it to me at Litchfield last Court, I succeeded in having him fix the Venue, which I had not before enquir<sup>d</sup> about, he said it was down in Washington Street H<sup>d</sup> & gave me a name which began with E the same given by M<sup>rs</sup> M. Although there is coincidence, I somehow gave not the slightest credit to the story, and should not have repeated it, but that I have generally found the young of both sexes are somewhat vain of being talk<sup>d</sup> of on such subjects, perhaps it is well however for men not to be very assiduous in visiting families where there are young ladies, if they have no view of the kind, for the *female market* is not as good as it *formerly was*, and I have within the last few years known two or three instances of a family implying a contract on very slight circumstances, perhaps not an advantage for a poor young lawyer, who had only his briefs to rely on for maintenance. You appear to be having something to do most of the time, and that is what keeps one up to the law, since I have been on the Court, I have refus<sup>d</sup> business in this vicinity which might by any possibility come before me, and indeed business was always more tedious to me if of a critical nature than it ought to have been. I have no doubt if I had given up amusements, work<sup>d</sup> hard, & gone where business was to be done, I might have earn<sup>d</sup> some reputation as well as money. I try some cases now as Auditor & Arbitrator, make and record a few deeds, and am persuaded that if I





[1848 and 1849]

had not taken the office of Judge, I might now do a business worth more than my salary. There are three requisites to make a lawyer rich, business, the art of collecting ones dues, & economy, if I had liv<sup>d</sup> on as little as many of my brethren have I might have sav<sup>d</sup> a tolerable estate only in that way . . . . .

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P<sup>t</sup> We now have a mail from N Y<sup>k</sup> every day, so put your letter in without regard to Day.

LITCHFIELD Dec<sup>r</sup> 19th, 1848.

Dear William,

I came to Litchfield this afternoon, where I shall be engag'd two weeks, may adjourn over Christmas, at all events I shall be at home over the Sabbath, and should be glad if you would come home if convenient. John Buckingham told me that Chloe Beach was coming up on Saturday before C<sup>r</sup>, on the N Y<sup>k</sup> & N H<sup>a</sup> Rail Road so I suppose it is expected to be done by that time.

There is a great rush to California. I think the gold will be variegated with Yellow fever or black vomit, & it may help some persons, will not however be as valuable as Iron would, as it is of small use in the arts, and merely enables its possessors to indulge in extravagances, which have ever had the tendency to effeminate & degrade Mankind. Spain is an example. However, perhaps we should all be willing to accept a portion of it without the labour incident to the acquisition of it here.

You are not yet old, I was almost 29 when first I was married, My first child would be 32 if now living. I was 35 when married to your Mother, and if you are old, what must I be? I feel gratified that you can earn your living, but should regret that by any overexertion you should injure y<sup>r</sup> health or improperly expose yourself, Mental & Physical labour properly divided prolong life, overaction at either end sometimes injures.





[1849]

Letter from H. Curtis

WATERTOWN January 20th 1849

. . . You have found you can place some reliance on yourself, and I am sure none of the small incidents, in the shape of interruption of views, which more or less belong to the whole body of Mankind, will disturb you for a moment. I have repeatedly thought within a year, that I had express<sup>d</sup> a view or opinion on a certain occasion, which if carried out, might possibly be productive of anything but domestic enjoyment. There can be no Aristocracy in this country but that which belongs to mind & character, correct views & sentiments are of more consequence than anything else. In early life, I had strong feelings, considerable Pride, and was somewhat punctilious, and have been twice at least (to say nothing of minor cases) plac<sup>d</sup> in situations which at the time I consider<sup>d</sup> very trying, & from which I believe a portion of that worldly management, which I have ever despised, would for the time have reliev<sup>d</sup> me. I have liv<sup>d</sup> long enough to thank God many times, for my escape from wretchedness, and have adopted the belief, that there is a good Angel or "Divinity that shapes our Ends, rough hew them how we will," and rescues us from many dangers into which we would otherwise unwittingly run. Men and women who are strong in themselves are proud of their strength. the weak and simple have family Pride & I have notic<sup>d</sup> that a family which has matur<sup>d</sup> is apt to retrograde, and that there is not as much confidence to be plac<sup>d</sup> in those who look back as in those who look forward . . . . .

Monday, January 22, 1849. I have today removed from Mr. Pelerin's. For nearly three years have I been domiciled there and when I find myself separated *pour a jamais*, it is with strong emotions. During those three years, I have both learned and lost. Miss Pelerin possesses great amiability and good sense, warmly attached to her, for she has ever shown me great kindness. Mais il me faut rester





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dans un Hotel Americain, et je suis logé a present a Judson's Hotel.

NOTE: This shows how he mastered French, Spanish and Italian. E.C.)

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Excerpt from Holbrook Curtis

WATERTOWN February 8<sup>th</sup> 1849

I sometimes feel apprehensions that I may go off somewhat suddenly. within the last year Messrs J. H. Bellamy & Nath<sup>l</sup> P Perry Esq<sup>rs</sup> both of this County, each about a year younger than myself have died. I was intimate with both of them. I believe the only lawyer remaining at this bar older than myself is M<sup>r</sup> Sterling (& he never attends another Court.) Phelps is a year younger and it was only yesterday or day before Doctor Linsley, a man about my own age, sawing wood fell suddenly dead & never breath<sup>d</sup> again, at Middlebury, where he liv<sup>d</sup>, so I feel that I ought to have my house ready, but our thoughts do not naturally stray from the things of Earth, while we remain on it, the death of an Individual makes little difference with the great world, we look at those who remain & forget those who are gone. . . . I see your Legislature has made a Senator of M<sup>r</sup> Seward who seems to have strong friends & a strong opposition, however he has the Senate for 6 years. I hardly understand the Whig Principles in New York. It seems to me they outradical the Loco Focos. I don't know that they have any Conservatism. I believe the principle is for each man to seize what he can & run with it, and if the Paper which I have patroniz<sup>d</sup> for many years & still continue to do, speaks the sentiments of the great Whig Party in New York I like them a trifle less than any party I have ever known. The Whigs here when I was about & among folks, were a *party* in favour of *enforcing the laws, securing to every one the enjoyment of private property & encouraging domestic industry*, by guarding the *rights and property* of every individual whether rich or poor. I understand by the *Tribune* that we all ought to





*Judge Holbrook Curtis*











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live in Common like the Nomadic Tribes & people, that Tenants ought to retain the lands leas<sup>d</sup> to them & pay no rents, that Capital & most other punishments ought to be abolish<sup>d</sup> & Criminals reform<sup>d</sup> by Singing Songs to them. And then again you needed some legal Reform in your State particularly in your Chancery proceedings, but a Code to practice law by, that shall embrace all the necessary authorities, so that everybody can understand it, is an imposition & a fallacy. Our legislature for the last two or three years has been possess<sup>d</sup> by evil spirits. I presume in the spring, between Free Soil & disgust, the State will go over to Loco Focoism, unless the strength of the Incoming Administration shall prevent it, however I care little about the subject, believing the men who howl in the Political Arena all about equally corrupt . . . .

. . . . It will probably take a trifle more than 4 months to make a continuous Rail Road Route to Waterbury, when passing will be expeditious, and I hope you will come more frequently, and perhaps I shall go more frequently. I suppose you are all California in New York. I understand both the Goodwin boys have gone, sons of Oliver, people leave who have wives & families with an apparent impression that they shall come home rich. The reflection of the scourges of sickness, disorder & other trials to which they will be exposed leaves but a Melancholy Image of the Gold they will get. The numbers going will cause quite a depopulation of our Country, few will return & those probably broken down for life . . . .

WATERTOWN Thursday March 15<sup>th</sup> 1849

Dear William

I have heard of M<sup>c</sup>Cauley's England, and was thinking I must try to save enough some way to purchase it. M<sup>c</sup>. is a beautiful writer, my only objection to him has been that as an English Whig, I have thought heretofore he underrated & bespattered the establish<sup>d</sup> Church, cry<sup>d</sup> up the





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Puritans, and with Carlyle & others of a late period had attempted to falsify History for the purpose of damning the House of Stuart, the establish<sup>d</sup> religion of England, & repealing the Curse which history has pronounc<sup>d</sup> upon Cromwell, as express<sup>d</sup> by Pope.

“ Or ravish<sup>d</sup> with the whistling of a name,  
See Cromwell damn<sup>d</sup> to everlasting fame.”

But McCauley is getting older, and in his Parliamentary career shew<sup>d</sup> himself tolerant. I suppose since Scott's death he is the best Prose writer in England (or rather Great Britain). In regard to y<sup>r</sup> office, I hope you are well accommodated. Mr M<sup>u</sup> is an old acquaintance & you may confide in him. I dislike ever to mention the name of a stranger disrespectfully, but the other person you named, whose initials are “ C G.” it may be I never heard of before, but there was a person of that name, who I have heard turn<sup>d</sup> out a rowdy, intemperate &c, may be this is not the person, perhaps if it is, I may have been misinform<sup>d</sup>, or if true he may have reform<sup>d</sup>. You doubtless know enough of human nature to use proper precaution in all cases. I thought I ought to mention it.

Letter from William to Judge Holbrook Curtis asking advice. It shows the intimacy between father and son.

No. 54 Wall St. March 20, 1849.

Dear Father,

I wish to trouble you on a matter of business.

Jno. J. Livingston has just called upon me and has paid me a small fee, and says that in case I succeed they will pay me a thousand dollars. It is as follows: Mary his mother married in 1788 Mr. Livingston who was for some years a Colonel in the Revolution. He died about 1816. She then married Mr. Betts who died a few years since. Mrs. Betts now lies in a feeble state from paralysis, and





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has been informed that nearly \$6,000 pension money in the way of back dues has accrued to her. She may not live but a few days and they have been victimized by some person who has taken no steps in the matter.

Now it is an unusual thing for a lawyer here to make application of this kind, and I am totally ignorant of the law and proceedings in such cases.

Knowing that you have some experience I wish to obtain from you the following information . . .

Is Mrs. Betts under the late Act of Congress entitled to a Pension? What steps and what proof is necessary? Are there any directions in particular to be followed?

Lastly, if she should succeed, can I by an Assignment or Power of Attorney, in some way secure my pay, as I know the nature of the beast too well not to be aware that he will pocket the funds when I have had the expense and trouble of procuring them.

Please to favor me with whatever you may think proper in the way of information, for I am as ignorant as a Hottentot, which way to turn, and have known only enough to cultivate a proper opinion of my capacity, and name a modest sum for a recompense, as you perceive.

It is late and with love to Mother I close hoping to hear by return mail. If you have printed instructions please send me the same.

Yours affectionately,

Wm. E. Curtis.

WATERTOWN March 30th /49

Dear William

I wrote you a letter inclosing some instructions as soon as I returned from New Preston, and put it in the mail Sabbath evening. I have never had just such a case as that of Mrs. Betts, I believe pensions were first granted by an Act of 1818, and I should suppose Mrs Betts if a widow of Livingston at that time (if the necessary proof





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could be obtained) would be entitled to a pension from that time until she married Betts, when I suppose it would cease. You probably now know the rules of evidence if you have rec<sup>d</sup> a circular applicable to such cases, as well as I do. I don't know whether you can obtain any evidence sufficient, if neither the Minister is living or the officer who performed the ceremony, and there is no record of any description of any person who was at the wedding, why all you can do is to send her lettersteel, sworn to by her, and evidence of cohabitation as man & wife, and the Common fame & opinion of neighbors, that she was the wife, that they had children — & whether such evidence is sufficient I know not. You must show there is no other if you rely on that.

I presume before this time you have rec<sup>d</sup> my other letter which told you all I knew in the premises and likewise told you I regretted you undertook it. Judge Jay of Bedford is a relation & she has some in New York, but they may or may not be able to give you information on the subject. It is frequently of late attended with trouble & expense to search the records of the place, & perhaps it may be in some old bible in ——— in trust.

Affectionately

H. Curtis

Saturday, March 31st. This is the first warm day of summer, that tells us the winter is gone. The Battery is fresh, and green, and the birds and the green leaves will soon make these brick walls fearfully irksome. I am at leisure for the most part this week, and I think my business prospects are not at present very promising.

Letter from Holbrook Curtis — April 9, 1849

Dear William:

Tomorrow I go to Litchfield to hold my Court for April, two weeks. It has usually heretofore been but one week, but business has so accumulated, that we have agreed





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to make the April short session on two weeks. Our Legislature looks squally. I believe the Whigs have a majority in the Senate. It is doubtful about the House. The State Officers are elected by joint ballots, all the others by resolution, which must receive the support of a majority of each House, acting separately. Three or 5 or 6 months pay as a member of Congress will not indemnify a man for the loss of his practice as a lawyer, if he is doing much. When lost, he can never again recover it. Your grandfather Edmond served two terms in Congress. Left a good practice. And then when he could have been elected for years without a question, declined being a candidate and returned to practice.

WATERTOWN, April 18, 1849

(From Holbrook Curtis)

Dear William.

You will be apt to find information of the services of Mr. Livingston from the Jays, who I take it were related. That is I believe Judge Jay's wife was Governor Livingston's sister. I may be mistaken. Their knowledge if they have any is traditionary, but I should think William Jay of Bedford, West Chester County, would be so much of a family historian that (if the relationship exists) if you were to address a letter of enquiry to him postpaid, stating your wishes he would know the fact and instruct you where you might find the necessary evidence. There are some of his sisters living in New York, on whom you might call. I should suppose if he had been an officer, they would know it from tradition and might tell you where you could find evidence of the fact.\* I am glad you have not formed a partnership with the man of whom you speak. It might be advantageous, but for the most part that is a ship I never should wish to sail in. I can spend money enough on my own account and wish no partner to have the power

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\*This case was satisfactorily concluded after trips to New Jersey and much delving into old records.





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of helping me, and if I ever formed any company business I should wish it so that the one could not commit the other by writing the company name. The public usually say caution is greatly developed in my case. I however think perhaps you may have made a good arrangement, and without knowing anything on the subject, I thought you might find the office you just rented in some respect objectionable. You do not say how your rooms are now as to ventilation, a matter of some consequence if you stay there in dog days.

Friday, May 11, 1849. No. 5 Nassau St.

Dear Parents,

.....

We had an affair last night here, which created some sensation, and the excitement continues today. You are doubtless informed of the difficulty between McCready and Forrest. Last evening some additional disturbance was anticipated, and very unwisely as I think, and contrary to the advice of the Chief of Police, it was determined to call out the 7th Regiment. The military force was paraded in various parts of the City during the latter part of the afternoon, and this feature had the effect of magnifying what would otherwise have been a comparatively trivial affair. Every one thought there would be *some fun* to use the phrase, and in consequence a vast body of spectators assembled. I had other engagements, but I think every person nearly at the Hotel went up.

This dense crowd formed a cover in front of which a few men and a large number of boys shouted and threw stones at the theater and soldiers, and then escaped into the crowd of spectators when the Police sallied forth to arrest them.

The military fired as I am informed without giving any notice, with murderous effect into the crowd, 19/20th of which was composed of spectators. A very respectable friend of mine who had just left the adjoining Church,





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told me that he considered the military force uncalled for, their presence only serving to attract a crowd, and promote irritation, and that their fire was given with no preliminary notice, and at a time when the police were present in great force. My own idea from what we can see in Paris and other cities where for fifty years mobs have been fired upon is, that it never cowers the mob so much as it hardens and brutalizes all classes. It has never been done in New York before. A charge with the bayonet, as was done in Montreal would have sufficed to have cleared the street.

I saw this morning the sides of a house marked by ounce bullets in 8 places as if a pick axe had been struck upon it with some force, and three young men lying dead on the floor of a room at the Station House as they were picked up and carried in, their boots and clothes on and their faces and shirts marked with blood. One was shot with a musket ball through the breast, another through the throat and the other through the head, and they were placed in one corner as carelessly as so many dead dogs would have been. This much for the riot.

I am quite well and I shall be able to come up the latter part of next week with Mr. Scudder, but I think it very doubtful, still I may. I will write to you when I shall come.

Yours Affectionately,

Wm. E. Curtis.

Tuesday, July 3, 1849. It is cool and delightful but the atmosphere is freighted with the cholera which is sweeping far and wide over the country. There were 108 cases in this City reported yesterday and 39 deaths. Little fear seems to be manifested as yet. The Courts are doing but a trifling amount of business, and no defaults are taken. In a few days the lawyers will say good-bye to these brick walls.

August 2. I left home in the morning and reached Hartford via Meriden at noon. Went to City Hotel.





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Heard the Inaugural address of the new President John Williams\* and was delighted. Dined with the Alumni, meeting of my class Clerc, Scott, Sanford, and my old chum Stone, and also Priest. I made some calls with Sanford. Took tea with him at Mrs. Chapman's. Attended the Levee at the house of Pres. Williams, and made my head swim with occasional glances at the fair face and beautiful form of sweet Harriet, or as more familiarly termed Hal Brownell. In the evening I supped at the Lunch with many old friends at the anniversary supper of the I. K. A. and retired among the small hours of the morning to a sleepless bed.

Wednesday, August 8, 1849. I have hardly seen my way as yet through the accumulated confusion of a fortnight's absence. I have been to Jersey City and as the plank was hauled in I said farewell to my old friend Henry S. Sanford. *Le Bon Dieu vous garde mon cher ami! C'est toujours ma Priere!*

Wednesday, August 15. Yesterday afternoon I attended at Trinity Church the funeral of Albert Gallatin. He had seen ninety winters, he had stood guard by the watchfires that ushered in the morning of our Republic, he had borne an honorable part in all the earlier administrations of the Government, and honored and respected by the people, he was carried down into the narrow house and laid by the side of her, the companion of his life who preceded him by a few days. Thus are the last of the *Patres Venerabiles* of the State falling from our midst.

"Iusum ac tenacem proposita virum  
Non civium ardor prava iuberitium  
Non vultus iustantis tyranni  
Mente quatit solida, neque Auster."

Friday, August 24, 1849. Saturday, last I went to Suffolk County and passed Sunday and Monday very agree-

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\*Later the Bishop of Connecticut. The handsomest old man I ever saw, a great friend of our family.





*Elizabeth Payne Edmond*  
*(Mrs. Holbrook Curtis)*











ably at the house of Mr. Scudder. One fair nymph has left quite an impression upon my flinty heart. Since penning the foregoing I have received a note to a picnic which I would be most happy to accept but I fear I must decline.

I include this sort of thing which with Judge Holbrook Curtis' letters form a sort of link between Revolutionary days and the fifties — Much of William Curtis' journal is dull but gives a picture of College, vacation at Watertown, and his professional start in New York.

#### Excerpt from Holbrook Curtis' letter.

Yesterday was very hot & I thought of Cholera. I see considerable lamentation in Temperance Papers about the use of brandy for cholera Patients. My own opinion is that which I have deriv<sup>d</sup> from Doctor Elton that Spirit may benefit Persons (who do not use it in health), when sick or recovering from sickness, but I have heard him say that he always lost his Patients in fever who us<sup>d</sup> it constantly, or to use his own language "kept full" as he cannot stimulate them with anything, if fever is off, when they are sick. On the whole, Men should use good sense on all occasions, be prudent, the slave of no habit in eating drinking or gambling &c or anything else. I smoke Segars some times and sometimes forbear doing it, being doubtful whether it is useful or hurtful, have a strong appetite, and eat sometimes more than I ought, which is the only habit to which I am at all enslav<sup>d</sup>. I can smoke or let it alone. I was born train<sup>d</sup> and season<sup>d</sup> in the midst of brandy rum winkum, Porter & current wine, never lov<sup>d</sup> it, or even the effect of it, and now perfectly hate it all or what I have seen of its desolation. My mother (Esther Holbrook) had 5 or 6 fine brothers, who were ruined by it, & Cardplaying. My Grandfather gave most of his estate to his boys on his side, it did them no good. My father did not receive from his father half as much as Uncle Abel, the sons of the latter who are living, are Nobody, or drunkards, or gamblers or both. I earnt only enough to live, until within 2 or 3 Years, I said "go to, I will be wise," and have sav<sup>d</sup> something, and if I had my strength continued long enough,





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might lay up, which I find consists alone in saving. I was educated suitably to make a gambler & drunkard as I was surrounded by folks that turn<sup>d</sup> out such all the early part of my life, but I never lost or gain<sup>d</sup> a Penny by any game of Chance, and could not play a decent hand of Cards any day of my life. I believe it may be a spirit of opposition in me, but if I find a young man inclin<sup>d</sup> to either of those vices, the spirit of repugnance in me amounts to Hatred, although it be a man with whom I am scarce acquainted. The result of all is that My Grandfather Holbrook (Captain John Holbrook of Derby, Connecticut), though rich, gave his estate principally to his boys. My Mother one of 12 Children rec<sup>d</sup> but a few hundred dollars, although the boys rec<sup>d</sup> enough in those days to make them what was call<sup>d</sup> rich. (Esther Holbrook was left the property at Oyster Bay which my grandfather never tried to claim). My father rec<sup>d</sup> less than he ought to have done from his father, added something, lost by Isaac Tomlinson (his son-in-law) a large sum. I T<sup>n</sup> was an amiable inefficient man, broke down in early life, and here am I about to render an account of my stewardship, Not very flattering to me. I have just sav<sup>d</sup> what I've had, while if it had not been for my early detestation of all Rowdyism, you would have been born an heir to rags & loaferism, for no man who was ever born had better opportunity to improve his education in the science that leads to loaferism. My mother was a good woman of strong sensibility & piety. My father had good natural sense, honourable feelings was pious in his feelings & intentions, but like most of the name when we were born had very excitable feelings, which sometimes ran beyond his control. I do not think as a general rule, it is fortunate to be very sensitive. My Mother was easily mov<sup>d</sup> to tears, she was hospitable, kind to the poor & distress<sup>d</sup>, that same morbid sensibility kept me from doing any thing the early part of my life. I observ<sup>d</sup> the same deep feelings in Henry. I think you are





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free from it, an advantage so far as business is concern<sup>d</sup>. I ought perhaps to have said My father & both Grandfathers attended family Prayers always on the Sabbath, partially on Week days. My Grandfather Holbrook was a Whig & a Churchman, such a case was unusual at the North, & he became so indignant because his Minister, D<sup>r</sup> Mansfield, sympathized with the English that he turned Presbyterian, all my Relatives were Churchmen with the exception of this aberration. My father us<sup>d</sup> to pettifog cases sometimes, was a ready & fluent speaker, lov<sup>d</sup> to read, and was unpopular with the mob & irreligious. I thought I would sometime say something of my progenitors, as tradition is all the knowledge we have on such subjects. No person knows his duty to parents until he has children.

Affectionately

H Curtis

Letter from H. Curtis.

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WATERTOWN Sept 23<sup>d</sup> 1849 Sunday

Dear William,

I have had an unusual amount of leisure this summer until the last 2 weeks, when I have been very constantly engaged. You live in a great City where there is much sin & wickedness, to which I hope the foundation has been so well laid you will not be expos<sup>d</sup>, & will be proof against the temptation. I have had many friends much more successful than Myself in accumulating property, who will leave it to those who will soon squander it. The Talmales & Governor Wolcott of Litchfield had much better have left \$100 apiece to their sons than what they did. Sanford was engaged for Blakeslee in this Town Case, he was formerly a Partner with Mr. B of Litchfield, and has a son Sophomore year at Yale College. He was speaking of his solicitude and the little expectation of Men for educated children, from the Numerous Cases in this County where such have turn<sup>d</sup> out Rowdies and drunkards. He said Mr.





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B — by his perseverance & industry had accumulated over \$100,000, & that what should be left to his sons would not last 5 years. It is the remark of Prince Eugene in his Memoirs, that “I have had very little time to sin in this world, and perhaps constant employment is as certain an antidote to an irregular life, as any there is.” Yet the legal profession has tendencies, particularly with advocates, which it is necessary strongly to resist, not to become disagreeable & unbearable. I have noticed it in others as well as myself, who am less expos<sup>d</sup> than most of my profession, the constant collision of mind to which the profession is subject exposes them to become disagreeable, cynical & repulsive. Now as you are but young, by close attention & management, you can control any such habit, if you see it growing upon yourself. I think you may be constitutionally somewhat punctilious and particular — but there is No habit or tendency a man may not govern. I am getting old & must of necessity soon leave. I see so much of death around me, that I ought any day to be prepar<sup>d</sup> for his Approach, the young may die soon, the old must. Your Mother is of frail constitution but may by many years survive Me, if in such an event you should be living, she will for care be entirely dependent on you. Patience, forbearance & kindness to old, feeble people is necessary to make them comfortable. I wish therefore you would train yourself as much as you can to be agreeable in such cases. It is not expected such people in their conversation or intercourse will be concise and exact as special pleaders. And if you can gratify their curiosity by answering any enquiries they may make at full length even — though they may not appear to have any Interest in the subject Matter you will increase their happiness at a slight inconvenience, and it may be necessary to overlook what is defection or amiss in Men. My reason for making these remarks is I thought the 2 or 3 last times you had been home I discovered a somewhat alter<sup>d</sup> manner on your part, which might need





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some guard, & that I might never have the opportunity of giving the caution, & it is not from any love of sermonizing I put such things in a letter . . . But I have long been convinc<sup>d</sup> that a small amount of Talent may succeed in almost anything. Truman Smith is certainly not a very great man. Perseverence with No great degree of scrupulousness, are his prominent qualities, yet I perceive he fills a large space in the public walk. Mrs. Tomlinson came to our house a week ago last Tuesday. I have been so much engaged I have hardly seen her. She & your Mother are at Church, & of course do not know I am writing.

Affectionately & C

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Journal W. E. C.

Saturday, September 29th, 1849. This day marks me twenty-six years old. I am humbled, and I despise myself when I see how much I can achieve and the utter nothingness of that which I have accomplished. Hope and Ambition gild the future before me, but each birthday when I look back tells me how cowardly I am, how enslaved by passions, how retrograde in life's journey of progress.

The past has been a bitter year, the sweetest dream of my life has forever vanished, nor hope, nor aught was left to console me, or mitigate the sorrow. I cowed in despair to my misfortune, and threw myself recklessly into the tumult of all that could distract weary and wretched thoughts. But I this day sternly swear to abandon the past and to toil and conquer for the future.

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Thursday, October 25, 1849. I have passed most of the last fortnight at Watertown, having made two visits there on account of my Father's severe illness.

Wednesday, November 7. The City and probably the State have gone for the Whigs. I voted the *Democratic*





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*ticket.* The weather is foggy and disagreeable, and business dull.

Monday, November 19. I am reading with great delight Chateaubriand "Memoirs D'Outre Tombe."

January 2, 1850. Half frozen by the severe cold, I yesterday rode about all day and called on my friends, and today find myself, exhausted by the exposure, and almost incompetent to write in my journal. Ten years since I commenced this journal with Henry S. Sanford, who sent me by the steamer a note with his New Year's compliments. He is now Secretary of Legation at Paris and I, I am going tomorrow morning to try a cause at the Kings Co. Circuit. I am too far gone with the misery of yesterday's fatigue and dissipation to read over the papers tonight. Au Revoir.

Saturday, Jan. 18th. I am occupied with old business, very few new suits brought. Tonight we have a ball at the Hotel given by those of us who board there. The Misses Mills' of 12th Street have promised me the pleasure of escorting them. I was last evening at a party given by Henry E. Davies, and am today miserable as I usually am after any little dissipation.

Thursday, Jan. 24. I am busy, partly in arranging my business so I can leave for Washington on Saturday, and also in a little speculation in the purchase of some mortgages. General Saltus died today at Judson Hotel, an eccentric bachelor whom I shall never forget. A Falstaff in life and morals, he died after a brief illness, with three score years and more upon him babbling of green fields and murmuring "God, God, God." I shall never forget the contrast either, between last Friday night when, after the small hours had more than commenced, he promenaded the ball-room upon my arm, keeping time with the music, strutting as usual, with a smile upon his face, and his white head pressed back upon his shoulders, and then this morning, insensible, haggard, groaning with every





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respiration, his beard grown, and no weeping eyes around him, whilst he painfully surrendered that life which he has so often told me would last to a hundred years, that his father died by accident at eighty-eight. "Alas, poor Yorick."

### Journey to Washington.

Friday, January 25th, 1850. I left New York at half past four p.m. and reached the United States Hotel in Philadelphia about ten o'clock of the same evening. The brilliant light of the full moon rendered the journey pleasant and enabled me to form some conceptions of the character of the country through which I was travelling. Miss — was seated at my side, and if she had possessed a little more beauty or a little more spirit, we could have commenced rather a romantic flirtation.

Saturday, Jan. 26th. After rather an uncomfortable night's rest, I found myself in the Baltimore cars early in the morning, dragging slowly through the quite tame, and to my taste uninteresting and cheaply constructed streets of Philadelphia. I was very favorably impressed with the character of country through Pennsylvania and Delaware, and for some distance into Maryland. The negroes, the sixty acre wheat and corn field, and the ploughing of the fields during this, with us, inclement month, told me that I was in another latitude, and in a slave-holding state.

I reached Baltimore about 2 p.m., dined, walked out to the Washington monument, and visited the cathedral, and just at night left for Washington. Baltimore as well as Philadelphia, seem small and meanly constructed cities as compared with New York. The streets about the docks were lined with clusters of ragged, dirty negroes, but the upper part of the town is well-built and agreeable.

I stopped at Coleman's National Hotel in Washington and with my friend, Mr. Shelton, of Derby, Conn., was put in a damp basement room of the court, or rather a





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ground room, which was heated to about 130 by a coal stove, while the temperature without was about 68, and I had a most wretched and uncomfortable night's attempt at rest.

Sunday, Jan. 27. This morning as I passed through the corridor to breakfast, I met a tall, thin, elderly gentleman dressed in black, his vest buttoned to his chin, and a gold chain passing about his neck, and over each side of his vest to his waistcoat pocket, and with long white, or nearly white hair. I looked at the face,—I had never seen the original before—but I had seen the marked features so often portrayed in every variety of style and position that I could not mistake it. It was Henry Clay, the idol of so many honest men, and the pride of his countrymen. He had a beautiful woman on each side of him, and as I passed he wished me a *good morning*, for every body here knows Mr. Clay and when met in the house he conceives that he might cut some modest friend if he passed any persons as strangers. After breakfast Mr. Shelton and myself attended the Episcopal Church. Casting my eyes back I saw another person, whose face I had never seen, but whose features were familiar. I recognized the short, stout, erect, iron-grey headed, hawk-eyed, big nosed man, dressed in dark blue buttoned to the chin, with a military look and posture of the shoulders, General Taylor, the President. He used no book in his devotions, but seemed contented and comfortable, with Mrs. Bliss at his side. After church, his daughter took his arm and with great republican simplicity walked home, as I did, while some others went in carriages and liveries. The day was excessively warm and to escape the heat of the sun we sought the shaded sides of the streets. We strolled about Washington and the grounds of the Capitol, already assuming the green huc of summer.

In the evening with Miss S. on my arm I went to the same church but it was closed, and then we walked back





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by a glorious moon, but it was all in vain. No romance *pour nous deux*.

Monday, Jan. 28. In company with Mr. Shelton and Senator Baldwin of Connecticut I called on the President. He received us with the most cordial simplicity, and favorably impressed me as to his good-sense and his judgment concerning men, things and politicians.

I visited the Patent Office, and saw the camp sword and uniforms of General Washington, then the Senate Chamber. After I had entered the ladies' gallery I looked down upon the galaxy of Statesmen that are now assembled there. The men with whose names I have been so familiar since child-hood, and whose long speeches read aloud by my father in the newspapers, during the winter evenings, have so often hushed me and my dog to sleep as we were stretched out together on the carpet before the bright wood fire. *Ah, ces beaux jours sont passés*. I saw Clay, Cass, Benton, Webster, Davis, Berrien, and a host of others. Mr. Calhoun was sick, and I did not have the pleasure of seeing him.

During the evening I went to a reception at Mrs. Collamers the wife of the Postmaster General. Miss S. on my arm, and mama watching us. *Pas de danger pour ton enfant*. Mr. Bulwer, the British Minister, was present for a time, and a crowd of about three hundred, comprising some lions and lionesses, ladies consisting of mothers and daughters, and gentlemen for the most part old and M. C.s. There was no dancing and at 10 I went home and slept well.

Tuesday, Jan. 29. After attending to some business in the morning I went to the Senate Chamber. The great questions agitated at present at Washington are the admission of slavery and the Wilmot proviso. The members from the South are extremely excited and prophecy disunion, bloodshed, etc. Even at Mr. Collamer's last night Mr. Butler, the colleague of Mr. Calhoun, from South





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Carolina, seemed half deranged on the subject, and begged some of the Northern ladies to endeavor to open the eyes of their male accompaniments, and exert themselves to a struggle to avert the dire and near catastrophe.

Mr. Clay, whose genius, and whose personal influence have so often enabled him to safely steer the ship of state through breakers on every side has been looked to by the men of all parties as the great pilot after God in this emergency. He has been preparing a compromise, and today when I visited the Senate Chamber my steps outside of the gallery were arrested by the sound through the closed approach to the gallery, of a clear and heavy voice that seemed to pass through the walls and doors, as if no such slight obstacles could impede its volume and cadence. I secured a place inside, and this was Henry Clay, who, an old man, with more than three score and ten upon his bleached head and unbroken form, stood with the eyes and attention of every Senator and every spectator riveted upon him, speaking in support of the Compromise Resolutions which he had just submitted to the Senate. Vehement, full of action, figurative, with his eye and countenance glistening with an almost supernatural look, I saw my full conception of what a great popular orator, of what a Demosthenes or a Mirabeau must have been. I listened for two or three hours with great attention. I saw him introduce a piece of the coffin of Washington, I heard his beautiful apostrophe and then when he defined his position on these momentous questions, I joined in the involuntary outbreak of applause from the galleries.

Cass, Jeff. Davis, Foote, Mason and many others followed. During the evening I called on Mr. Inge and Mr. Harris of Alabama to whom I had letters of introduction, was very cordially received.

Wednesday, Jan. 30. I was this morning on motion of the Hon. Mr. Inge, introduced and admitted Attorney and Counsellor of the Supreme Court of the United States, and





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I lingered some time in the court-room listening to the arguments of a cause in which Mr. Webster and Mr. Baldwin were employed. I strolled into the library which seemed to me to be quite an insignificant affair, compared to what the Government ought to possess, and after that passed a most agreeable hour in the examination of the paintings which surround the Rotunda. From this place I found my way to the summit of the dome, and enjoyed for a very long time the view of the lovely valley of the Potomac.

Thursday, Jan. 31. A fresh, cold, windy morning. I walked to the landing of the Alexandria boats through the vacant squares of Washington, and soon found myself in the old and seemingly half deserted city of Alexandria. I procured a horse and hurried away through the mud, and streams in the direction of Mount Vernon, and after two hours riding over roads that had not been repaired since Gen. Washington's death, and through woods, marshes and farms, without getting sight of a human being, I gave myself up for lost and went hoping to find some house where I could obtain the information I needed. But all at once I emerged into six or seven hundred acres of cleared territory, with a venerable old mansion showing its weather cock and chimneys in the distance. I galloped on and from a grinning negro boy who came towards me with a horse team floundering in the mud, I learned that this was Mount Vernon. I reached the house, passed a dilapidated conservatory full of hogs; and evidently used as a hog-pen, glanced around at the fast decaying specimens of ancient ease and wealth, and half dead and famished with cold, I went to one door of the venerable mansion and knocked, but no one came. I then walked around to a long piazza that faces the river, and here better success awaited me. I sent in my card and a servant showed me to two rooms, furnished with old fashioned furniture, mouldings and pictures, the same as in General Washington's day. The serv-





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ant pointed in the direction of the tomb, and I hastened to pay my homage to the ashes of the man. I recalled all that my grandfather had told me in childhood of his intercourse and of his affection and admiration for General Washington, and breaking a twig from an evergreen near by as a souvenir of my pilgrimage, I mounted my horse, and with the close of this unpleasant January day I bid Adieu to Washington, tarried that night in Baltimore and the next day reached New York.

Letter from Holbrook Curtis.

Sunday, Feby. 3d 1850

Dear William:

I Rec<sup>d</sup> your letter from the Capitol, a place I have never seen, and so small a portion of life is left to me that I probably never shall. I hope there is Patriotism enough left in the Country to induce our Rept. at Washington to preserve the Union. Mr. Clay has heretofore pursued a Conservative course, as in the Case of the Missouri Compromise, and the South Carolina excitement, but the people at the South are at this time so violent and unreasonable, that they will compromise Nothing on Any such terms as are rational. And our people at the North will not all of them readily be made Slave Catchers. I fear the folly and weakness of a few will be the Means of enciting a Civil War. The taking of Texas was a vile dishonest transaction, to sustain the Slave Institutions of the South. I believe that unlike Individual, National Sins are punished in this World, and that we shall have to do much Penance for the wrongs done to Mexico.

I believe Mr. Mallery expects to leave Watertown with his family. I see the Scovils had form<sup>d</sup> a joint Stock Company with a Capital of \$200,000, of which their Factorys, In Watertown and Waterbury, dwelling Houses and other buildings, Machinery, Goods and so forth constitute \$140,000. Mr. Mallery, Eli Curtis, the Buckinghams and sev-





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eral others take the remainder, \$60,000, Nothing venture Nothing have is the Maxim, but I confess I should hardly have been willing to take stock under the circumstances if it could have been given Me. The Real Estate and so forth turn<sup>d</sup> in at \$140,000, with the power of Controlling the business entirely on the part of the Scovils. A reverse of times Makes the buildings worth Nothing when out of use, but Mr. M. and the others know much better about it than I do, and Mr. M. has made All the property he has, and I hope will Make More but I think it would have been safer to have been hir<sup>d</sup> As he has been heretofore, but he expects every thing will always continue as it Now is and I should be very unwilling to intimate to him that I think he has made a bad operation. I think the Scovils and Buckinghams have Made a good one, As they get \$60,000 Cash in the Concern, and it remains principally theirs. Please remember Me with regard to my Relatives, friends and acquaintances

Affectionately

H Curtis

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WATERTOWN March 24<sup>th</sup> 1850 Sunday

Dear William.

Yours of the 20<sup>th</sup> ins<sup>t</sup> was duly rec<sup>d</sup>, I hope M<sup>rs</sup> Chapman may recover, when Younger she was a beautiful woman, & has liv<sup>d</sup> to see Reverses of fortune very striking . . . much as writers sneer at Mammon there cannot be a More Comfortless situation than to be in debt, to that circumstance I thoroughly believe is to be attributed the death of Adams, by the hand of Colt, as well as that of Doctor Parkman. Bishop Griswold in early life preach<sup>d</sup> at Harwinton East Plymouth and Northfield, his whole Salary was \$300 *per year*. he had a family of *14 Children*, Most of whom died of consumption after they had reached Maturity, but he would never be in debt,\* he warns in his letters all Young

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\*Perhaps some of the 14 might have lived had he borrowed a few cents.





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Clergymen against it, advises them to labour as he had done in the Summer & Keep school in the winter rather than be in such a state of dependence, says that by labour their constitutions will be improv<sup>d</sup>, their lives prolong<sup>d</sup>, & their Mental as well as Physical powers improv<sup>d</sup>. He was distinguished in *Boston* among the Great as a Man of Mind & Science. I hope Mr. P.† if he comes here, Will be a Man who has some Piety & some talent, it is poor encouragement to sit under One Who possess Neither. There came one fellow from East Plymouth to Query me (on Politics) with a view as I perceiv<sup>d</sup> to publish something to help Johnson My Opponent. I told him freely that I thought there was very little difference between those who Manag<sup>d</sup> the Politics of our Country on either side, that they were the *rough scuff and bobtail* of the Country, & as much alike as rotten Apples. I suppose he will publish something in the L<sup>d</sup> Republican this Week for effect. If he tells truth I shall be satisfied, for I was as willing to salute the Managing Whigs with a Salute of a kick on the backside, as My Opponents.

Affectionately,

H Curtis

March 2. I went to Connecticut and returned March 5.

Monday, March 25. I have just read *Shirley* with much pleasure, have commenced reading *La Nouvelle Heloise*. Mrs. Chapman, the relict of the late Hon. Asa Chapman of Connecticut, died yesterday and I have just returned from her funeral. She was the widow of the gentleman with whom my father studied his profession, and is about the last of those persons in Newtown whose names in childhood became familiar to me on account of their being so often mentioned by my parents.

I am now lodging at Julien Hotel, a quiet French Establishment, and arranged upon the European plan. But I breakfast and dine in the lower part of the city. This

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†The clergyman.





[1850]

arrangement brings me nearer to *Miss Scovill*, with whom I believe I am having a serious flirtation.

Thursday, Dec 12. 1850. Thanksgiving Day. I have now opened a new volume in my book of life. I live no longer for myself alone. My word, my honor, all that is sacred and binding to me as a man and a gentleman, yes, and as a Christian, last night were pledged to a young, fair girl, lovely in soul and person, that at God's altar I would make her mine, for better or for worse, and her vows to share my lot and portion in this world were tremblingly uttered, and henceforth I have a companion at the solitary hearthstone of my heart. Deus volens.

I have but little to offer but myself, and told her so, but with the confiding trustfulness of her generous woman's heart, she never thought of giving that a care. On this day of general Thanksgiving I thank Thee, my Heavenly Father, for many blessings, but above all I thank Thee for the pure, generous, devout young heart that in thy Providence has become mine. May its every pulsation be happy, and for long years may I feel it beat against my own, and may all the blessings promised in this life, and in the world to come to the good and virtuous be our lot, granting us Thy sustaining Grace to be deserving thereof.\*

I hope the next Thanksgiving Day will find me a married man, enjoying the comforts of home and fireside, and that I shall thus quietly and pleasantly pass the meridian and close of life. I shall now consecrate my time and energies to put myself in a position to accomplish that object.

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\*From reading my father's and mother's letters, they really seemed to be in love up to the day of my father's death.

They met at the house of General Thomas Davies while my mother was spending the winter with his brother Judge Henry E. Davies at 33 Clinton Place.

She had a beautiful voice of such range that she sang all of Jenny Lind's songs with ease and when I was a child I remember meeting an old gentleman who described how lovely she looked while singing and playing the guitar when she was seventeen.

She had been educated at the Emma Willard School in Troy and told how the attic was filled with casts of the great Emma's feet, which had been modelled while on the famous trip to Europe when she wrote "Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep."





[1850 and 1851]

Monday, Dec. 23. I am far in arrears with my business, but I do not let it trouble me. I devote almost every evening to the society of the lady who promises me before another Christmas to be my own.

New Year's, 1851.

I made about fifty calls on my friends, riding about rapidly, dined at 6 p.m. and passed the evening at the side of Miss Scoville. I drank little or no wine.

Jan. 26. Sunday. I have read nothing this week aside from law, and done nothing except suffer with a severe cold, attend to business, and go out every evening to parties. My devotion to the latter business is rapidly escaping. Thursday evening I was at a small, but very delightful party at the house of the late Attorney General, Mr. Jordan. Mr. Washington Irving had accepted an invitation, and was expected, but I was disappointed in not meeting him. N. P. Willis, Mr. James the novelist,\* Mr. Van Beuren, Judges Betts, Campbell, Vanderpoel, Sanford and the venerable old Chief Justice Jones were present, and numbers of brilliant and talented gentlemen and ladies. The party was small, about 125 present. Mr. Willis had rather the appearance of the exquisite gentlemen of taste and leisure. His face indicates a close approximation to forty, and his hair waves in natural light brown curls over his forehead, but his conversation and address, etc. are all indicative of the simple, wellbred gentleman. Time, and care have changed his features very much from the handsome young man that he appears to be in his engravings. His eyes and nose are not handsome, the former blue and small.

Mr. James is a stout-built, healthy Englishman a few years older than Willis, but with a far better lease of life. His fresh florid face, with heavy, frosted mustache, and imperial, wearing the look of one of the men at arms, or solitary horsemen, that he is so fond of portraying. He converses well, and is evidently conversant with elegant society.

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\*G. P. R. James.





*William Edmond Curtis*











[1851]

Prince John was the lion of the evening, with wit, genius, gallantry, and as splendid a form and head as that of Saul and towering far above six feet men, or rather dwarfs in comparison like myself, he shone the favorite of women, and envied by the men.

Chief Justice Jones 84 or 85 years of age, with a clear head and bright eye walked the rooms, the centre of a group of professional men, and younger judges, who turn to him as an oracle. Night after night he goes to these parties, takes a Friar Tuck quantum sufficit of wine and eatables, etc. and humiliates young men like myself who are weak enough on half of his ration to complain of disagreeable feelings next day.

But I was a looker-on in Venice, save when the bright eyes of my charming M. A. lured me to her side. But these are the last days of my dissipation; henceforth, and now "Onward" and the motto of my arms "Sapere Aude" rings in my ears.

Sunday, Feb. 2, 1851. The weather has for the last three days been intensely cold, and today it has moderated into a violent snow storm. I have attended some parties, and declined others, my professional occupations not permitting me to waste any energies in dissipation, when the interests of my clients demand every exertion, and every moment of time in their behalf. Sunday comes a blessed day of rest and comfort. Would to Heaven this world was one Eternal Sabbath!

Sunday, March 2. Blessed Sunday. Toil during the week days, and a chat every morning with my dear, darling Mary. God bless her and protect her. I am not good enough, devout enough, forbearing enough for so young and fair a flower, but I will try to make her life pleasant. Who can read the future days?

Thursday, March 1851. We are in the midst of paint and confusion at the office, and many disagreeable things incident to repairs. Business rules and absorbs every energy





[1851]

of mind and body, and I look back at the fast receding months in absolute dismay at the want of progress on my part in reading and literary pursuits. I am becoming lost in the devotion to business, and must endeavor to make an escape, for at least an hour or two every day. But soon I trust to have a home where I can pass many hours profitably that are now lost in the vortex of a bachelor's cares and pleasure. Money and professional success do not constitute the great objects of human career and earthly *avenir*, but are the instruments that must be to some extent secured, to ensure ultimate success. Health and hope, and present success sustain me when I feel low-spirited, and every force of body and soul prostrated.

Saturday, March 22. *Tout va bien*. I am doing well, and today I find myself in good spirits.

Tuesday, April 1. I have worked harder during the past month and received more money than I have during any previous month of my professional career. I have been intensely mortified by the loss of several causes. Even pecuniary success is a poor alleviation to the pain produced by my sensitiveness on these points. I have run along regularly most of the common phases of a common-place existence. My marriage yet remains to be looked forward to, but the daily nearer approach to that event already half unables me to realize it. But Alas! My hair is turning grey and I feel that the buoyancy of my youth is gradually submerging under the tide of many, many cares, and my unfortunate deficiency of all power to drive cares away.

Monday, April 21. Miss Scoville has been in the country for the week past, and I am desolé as a Frenchman would say; so accustomed had I become to her society every evening that I have been almost at a loss to know what to do with myself. I have recently read the novel "Mount Hope" of my friend Hollister, *The New Neva*, and am now reading the *House of Seven Gables*. I have been also hard at





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work, and now the rain having fallen for several days steadily, I am almost worn out.

Thursday, May 1, 1851. April 26 I went to Connecticut. On the 29th I officiated as groomsman at the marriage of Miss Alatheia Scoville, and Mary Ann, her sister, was the bridesmaid. The whole affair passed pleasantly and happily, and I returned with the happy pair to New York. In September I must figure as principal in a similar transaction. When I stood before the altar in the presence of 700 persons, I began to realize its proximity.

Friday, May 23, 1851. Last Saturday I went to Waterbury. Sunday I passed at home, on Monday I called for dear Mary, and drove her to Watertown and introduced her to my father and mother. We dined there, and after dinner the ladies and myself strolled through the fields, gathered wild flowers, and then we returned to Waterbury. The next evening I returned to New York.

Wednesday, June 11. I returned Monday evening from Waterbury where I went Friday p. m. The weather was stormy and chilling, but the presence of my dear little Mary made the visit delightful.

Monday, June 16. I have been passing Sunday at Greenbank, near Elizabethtown, N. J., the seat of Henry E. Davies, Esq. Yesterday was one of those delightful June days that are made doubly attractive by being enjoyed in the fresh air and delicious shade of the country. *J'espère vous voir demain soir, Chere petite Marie.*

Friday, June 20. The temperature of the air has been cool and delightful thus far most of the month of June. Last night I heard the opera of *La Favorita* sung at Castle Garden. Miss Scoville was there with me. I was delighted with the music et tout. Elle est allée ce matin a Connecticut avec son pere.\*

June 28th. The time seems now to be near at hand when I enter upon one of the great relations of life, and I should

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\*My mother said that between the acts they walked in an open loggia overlooking the moon-lit bay.





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toil to prepare all things for the tranquil enjoyment of that new wine of life, that glitters so fair and bright in the distance.

Wednesday, July 8. 2 p. m. I have just returned from Waterbury where I have passed a week delightfully, and now to the oar in earnest.

Wednesday, Aug. 20. I feel weary and worn out with cares and sleeplessness. I have among others, that of finding a boarding house for my future residence, a mode of living I utterly detest. I have sought in vain for something tolerable but have not yet found it. The days of my bachelorship are drawing to a close.

Aug. 26, 1851. Tuesday. I last evening returned from Waterbury with Mr. Scoville, where I had been very pleasantly passing Sunday. The next visit and I shall return with the dear wife of my heart, and not alone as I have heretofore done shall I wander on through this journey of life. One week from this time, and I shall have arrived at the hour which, last December seemed so lost in the future, that I could not realize that it would ever arrive. The invitations are all out, and I have made most if not all of the usual preparations for decently interring my bachelor-hood. These are the last days of my liberty which I am impatient to see hasten away, so anxious am I to wear the silken fetters.

Saturday, Aug. 30. This afternoon I leave for Connecticut. Tuesday I am to be married. This is the last day I pass in New York before I enter the new and sacred relation of life, to which I approach as one of the great turning points in my existence. I looked forward to college life, from that to admission to the bar, and now absorbed and wearied in the cares and duties of my profession, I look to this new existence, over which the last morning star of my life is dawning, the last in the horizon of youth, with cheerful remembrance of the sad and pleasant past. I take for my partner, one who is amiable, devout, and who loves me, and whom I love with all the deep affection and impulse





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of my nature. I trust to find her a solace and a blessing, to be hallowed by her better influences, to be made a holier man, and happier man, yet with it, I anticipate additional cares and griefs. God bless the sequel to me and mine. And here I must erect the gravestone of that single existence that has heretofore been mine.

Wednesday, Sept 10. On Saturday, the 30th I went to Waterbury. On Sunday morning I went to Watertown, from whence on Monday I returned to Waterbury. On Monday evening and Tuesday several of my friends and relatives arrived in Waterbury, and that evening in St. John's Church by the Rev. J. L. Clarke I was united in marriage to Mary A. Scovill, daughter of Wm. H. Scovill, Esq. The Church was filled to suffocation, and after the ceremony the house of Mr. Scovill was filled by the numerous guests bidden to come to the wedding. The affair passed off finely. Dark clouds and a heavy rain gave place to a beautiful evening as the hour of the wedding approached. Charles R. Chapman, Henry J. Scudder and Thomas Powers, Esquires, were my respective groomsmen. Wednesday we went to Springfield, Mass., and on Thursday to Boston. On Saturday we arrived at Portland, and leaving there on Monday arrived in New York via Stonington at 6 a. m. this morning. And now I am again as of old once more busy at the law, not for myself alone but also toiling for one dearer than myself. Fatigue weighs heavy today, and I must close my book and hope soon to close my eyes in the sleep which the steam-whistle and confusion of the steamer last night prevented me from doing. I wrote for my journal the day I was married the following, which I now insert as a trace of my feelings and emotions at that time:

12 M. Sept. 2, 1851. It is noon and raining fast. Tonight I am to be married. The groomsmen are here and talking downstairs. The bridesmaids are here with their rich *toilettes*, which the rain will prevent them perhaps from wearing to Church. If it rains we





[1851]

are to be married in the house. The event is at hand, the long expected, the long hoped for, that from childhood has been visible at the extremity of the perspective of life. How many thoughts friends, feelings, and passions have ripened since the dream of a wife, and a fair girl passed across my child-hood brain. And since that vision melted from my eyes, how strange and varied has been the experience that men designate life and time and years. I have lived years in weeks. This is a day to be remembered in the calendar of my existence. I make solemn vows, God enable me to keep them! This is the last entry in the Book of My Solitary Existence.

(Note by E. C.)

The wedding was in the Church recently built upon the site of the one in which the Rev. James Scovil, my mother's great grandfather, preached. The reception which followed the ceremony was in the white colonial house at the end of the green. The candle light and polished floors, the full skirts of the women, their low cut bodices with berthas and hanging curls, must have made a charming picture. My mother's wedding gown was white figured silk and my father's waistcoat and stock were of similar material. In the trunk containing her trousseau is a changeable yellow taffeta, with which she wore a cerise camellia over each ear and for an extra wrap, a Chinese shawl brought on a sailing vessel as a wedding present. The bridesmaids were Louisa Davies, afterwards Mrs. Henry J. Scudder, Augusta Smith, the niece of my grandfather's second wife who married Mr. George Bliss of New York and Miss Martha Kendrick of Waterbury. My mother's sister Ruth Alatheä had been married a short time before to Mr. Frederick J. Kingsbury. On their wedding journey to Boston and the White Mountains they were thrilled at meeting Daniel Webster and their letters are as happy and carefree as those of any bride and groom today. The year after their marriage





[1851]

Grandfather Scovill\* bought and furnished for my mother the house at 98, or according to a later numbering 209, East 15th Street, where most of the children were born. My mother had all the inspiration, sense of beauty and temperament, but sacrificed everything to her husband and babies and gave up singing shortly after her marriage. All of her letters and journals are full of notes about flannels, clothes, toys, books, etc. for all of us. She wrote to each of the absent boys once a day; and Will, her first baby, after he grew up, wrote to her just as often to the end of her life. She records that when he was five years old he was asked if he wanted to go somewhere with his father and he answered "I want to stay with my darling little mama" — and now he is buried there beside her, at Watertown —

Letter from Holbrook Curtis

WATERTOWN Sabbath morning Sept<sup>r</sup> 7<sup>th</sup>/51

My dear Children

I hardly know in what terms or language to commence my address, Whether to say My dear Children or D<sup>r</sup> W<sup>m</sup> & Mary Ann, but no language can be stronger than my feelings, & no solicitude greater than that I feel for Your Material happiness health & enjoyment.

I suppose, you W<sup>m</sup>, Will be rather constantly at Y<sup>r</sup> office. Where you cannot Well take Mary Ann, so she Must when she has No Calls to make or take, write, play the Piano, & do all other pleasant things, At all events contrive to prevent time from passing heavily. Maria is yet with us, I believe M<sup>rs</sup> McLean remain<sup>d</sup> a day or two at Waterbury & Went to Hartford, she call<sup>d</sup> here with her Mother I understood on Wednesday after I had gone to Litchfield but made no long stay. M<sup>r</sup> Chapman has been very constantly at Litchfield, I return in the Morning

Affectionately

H. Curtis

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\*My grandfather Scovill and his brother James founded the Scovill Manufacturing Co. in Waterbury in 1810, a brass mill which during the late war was the only concern to produce material for the U. S. Gov. 100 per cent perfect.





[1851]

Postscript by Elizabeth Curtis

We had a delightful ride after the wedding, all of us in excellent spirits. I have been better than usual since. Dr. Berry gave us two sermons. Mr. Reid read service. Mrs. Reid leaves tomorrow for New Haven. When shall you come here? Maria is staying with me. Mrs. Tomlinson left Friday morning. Wm. Armitage reminded me of his Father, who spent some years in Col. Starr's family. I should like to become acquainted with him, his Mother was a very lovely Woman. He said Ellen was soon to be married to a Gentleman from Kingston, thought she would do well. It is not probable I shall ever again see so many of our friends together. Mr. and Mrs. Chapman, Mrs. Tomlinson & Wm. Booth were at my Wedding. Wm. however was not old enough to congratulate us. Miss Kendrick, and the other ladies, were quite charming. I can sympathize with Mary Ann in her leave-taking of her former friends, although it is so long since, those with whom we commenced the journey of life can never be forgotten. New acquaintances like flowers will be springing up before you, some perhaps quite as evanescent, but it will be a long time before they will fill the place of those you have left.

May the choicest of Heaven's blessings rest on you both, is the wish of your affectionate Mother

E. Curtis

It would give us pleasure to receive a line from either of you.

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Saturday, Sept. 20, 1851. I am a married man and happy as such. What more can I add more expressive? True it adds to my cares, and anxieties for the present and future are increased, but with these come greater incentives to action. I hope to be a better and an abler man. I have led rather a leisurely life. Next week I shall commence work in good earnest.





*Mary Ann Scovill*











[1851]

Monday, Sept. 29, 1851. I am twenty-eight years of age today. Since the last anniversary I have assumed the grave obligations of a husband and I trust that I have now buffeted the storms and the surges of youth, and that I shall henceforth safely in port, ride out tranquilly the remainder of life. I have to record besides my marriage, that I have toiled almost unremittingly at my profession the past year, and that I have secured I hope to myself, by the investment of my past labors, a modest income, which I shall endeavor to fortify and augment so as to secure a better provision for myself and mine than the precarious one of my profession.

Excerpt from letter of H. Curtis.

W<sup>m</sup> has been so long abroad & so seldom at home, that our Watertown folks have very little knowledge of him, but I have No doubt but, if I were living there Myself, that some of our Worthies with whom I have had very little intimacy, would come down to see the Lions,\* & quarter themselves upon us, to save their fare, unless they could find gratuitous keeping elsewhere. We are very prudent people here, who are very apt to call on friends where We can save or make something by it.

*In olden time* hospitality was a very different thing from what it is *with Moderns*. I recollect the troops who us<sup>d</sup> to gather together at Thanksgiving & Christmas, Relatives, those who had been Domestic, & last of all the Negroes, for whose Society in the Cellar Kitchen when a Child I had a strong penchant, on such occasions were all seen at the Old Mansion House, full fed, happy, dance, sing & fiddle.

One of my grandfathers was a Whig (Holbrook), & the other a Tory (Curtis), the Whig deserted the Church, went to Congregationalism, & denounc<sup>d</sup> British Manufactures. We ate on *Pewter plates*. The negroes in the Cellar Kitchen Were in point of law Slaves, but they seem<sup>d</sup> to My Child-

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\*"Lions" is used all through this as we would use "sights."





[1851]

ish imagination the best, freest & most happy of beings, & to do them justice they Were the last of my old Childish Relatives who deserted me, As they us<sup>d</sup> to call occasionally up to 20 Years ago, & I still retain rather a regard for them, which I can not transfer to the Irish. My old Grandfather never adopted with his Change of Religion (he left the Episcopal Church at the Revolution) the ascetic Manners of his sect, but always enjoy<sup>d</sup> the happiness of others Whether High or Low, Rich or Poor, White or Black; It seems to me the old hospitality of the Country is gone, or else I have grown old & have outliv<sup>d</sup> it.

Have Y<sup>r</sup> people Come home yet? I wish to send some Articles We have of theirs. Come & see us if You Can & spend some time with us When you Come. I suppose W<sup>m</sup> does not like to be absent but by & by You Can endure separation for a short time. Mother sends love to you both

Affectionately

H Curtis

#### Postscript

I am sometimes troubled to make stamps stick. I always put one on, but I have known some instances where they have Not kept on. I suppose in all the Festivities of Thanksgiving, Christmas & New Years, You will Come up & if W<sup>m</sup> cannot come or stay perhaps he had best give you a Furlough of a few days. You might perhaps if Well enough have gone to the Ladies Convention at Worcester, & made a Speech, they have (some of them) apparently some Powers of Eloquence, & describe very feelingly the Tyranny to which they have been subjected by the Lords of Creation, but I doubt on the whole Whether it would Not be rather a dangerous experiment to mix up Men & Women in the primary Assemblies of the people, Political Meetings, or juries, in the Legislature & congress, & whether it would Not be More honour<sup>d</sup> in the breach than the observance. It Might be very *Safe* for *Most* of the Ladies Assembled at Worcester, from the account I have





[1851 and 1852]

heard of them, but the general adoption of such habits by them I should much fear would not be follow<sup>d</sup> by any public benefit.

Affectionately  
H C

Journal W. E. C.

Monday, Dec. 29. I have this morning returned from Connecticut after having made a most delightful visit to Waterbury and Watertown.

New Year's, 1852

Made many visits, a charming day. Mrs. C. received calls in company with Miss Kendrick. I can hardly yet realize that I am no longer a waif and stray upon Life's ocean.

Jan. 9, 1852. On the 7th, I signed an agreement with the Hon. Samuel A. Foot, late Chief Justice of the Court of Appeals, who is about to return to the bar, to conduct professional business jointly with him. My existing connexion not to be disturbed, and I am today looking out for a suite of offices.

Friday, Jan. 30. We have contracted to buy No. 98 East 15th Street for a residence, and tomorrow we are intending to make a visit over Sunday to Waterbury. Mary Ann will remain there for a few days.

TO MRS. W. E. CURTIS,  
% HOLBROOK CURTIS, ESQ.,  
WATERTOWN, CONN.

Saturday, April 3, 1852.

Dearest Mary,

It is half past ten P. M. and I shall not tarry long at the inkhorn. I hope and pray that you safely arrived in Waterbury on Saturday, if you did not manage to reach there on Friday night, which I endeavor to believe you did, considering the favorable auspices under which you com-





[1852]

menced your journey. I saw Mr. Lane as I was leaving the depot, the car in which you were seated had moved off, and I told him briefly where you were, and to keep a look out for you, which he promised to do.

Mr. Waterman and myself finished Mr. Pickwick's trial last night. Your Uncle Henry called with the three boys,—Willy amused himself reading and the two elder refreshed themselves with a little of Tivoli on the Piano, bye the bye, a very convenient use to put the board, and though I felt apprehensive it might scratch the piano top some, I did not like to interfere with juvenile pursuits. This is written with the intention of bringing you back to look after the chattel, but I had not the hardness of heart to leave you with the supposition that the piano had fifteen or twenty large scratches upon it, and so I gave the explanation.

Today I have pulled as usual at the oar, and having done my duty to men, women and children in the course of it, and having eaten one of kind natures solid restoring dinners, I betook myself to your Uncle 'Thomas'. I found he had just returned from Albany, half sick, having been anchored on a sand bar for five hours, and eaten steamboat husks for the balance of the twenty four.

Mr. Foot has drafted a Bill, which embodies his project, and which, I really think has considerable merit, and with some amendments I hope it will pass. Your Uncle feels very confident that it will become a law. After playing two games of Dummy, we being the victors, and your presence much desired, especially by your dutiful husband, I decamped for these quarters. I wish you were here, my darling, but I am doing the next thing to seeing you here, which is writing to you. I have endeavored two or three times during the day to seize enough of Old Father Time's progress to write you a few words which though late I know you will esteem as better than none. So Good night, and God bless you, and pleasant dreams enchant you. Adieu Petite femme.





[1852]

Sunday A. M. *Before Breakfast! ! !*

Mary\* obeys orders admirably, so that I do not feel at all as Dives did, though the atmosphere is too inviting to keep me at home this morning. By the enclosed extract from Friday's Ev. Post, you will see that the Sequel to Thanatopsis is not written by Mr. Bryant. I thought the Sequel was too imitative of the original and that Mr. Bryant had forgotten his wonted modesty in commencing by talking about himself. Still it is better as an imitation than any of the Rejected addresses, and worth keeping. Mary has made her appearance to know if I wanted a fire.

I shall take this down immediately after breakfast to the P. O. and trust to get a despatch announcing your safe arrival at the same time. Give my love to Father and Mother, and don't "play at meetin'" when you are at Watertown. I suppose tomorrow will decide the Election of Mr. Kingsbury. I hope he will succeed. Father used to be something of a politician, but of late years he has had so many cares, especially in the Spring of the year, that he has no leisure to do anything except discover much corruption and baseness in old politicians.

Hoping you are well, and with "oceans" of love to you my darling, and showers of kisses, I am yours most affectionately,

Wm. E. Curtis.

Wednesday, June 30. I read today that Losee Van Nostrand is dead. An old friend, one of my earliest in Brooklyn, and the last of the types of our ancient Dutch population. I read that Henry Clay died yesterday. It is as if something that bound me to the past was forever broken. From earliest childhood his name has been ever present in the public journals and Congressional Debates, and I have grown up and matured, hearing his name daily on men's lips. Eloquent, patriotic, generous, brave to chivalry, the

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\*The servant.





[1852]

the best loved man in the country, he has fallen on the field of his fame in the shadow of the Capitol, where his genius and his influence have so often *served*, if not *saved* our Union.

July 3rd. Saturday, 4 1/2 p. m. The funeral cortege, with the corpse of Henry Clay has just passed under my office windows. I recognized the same uniforms that I saw on the troops that welcomed him to New York by this same route when he came here living; then I did not see him.

Saturday, July 10. I have passed most of this week in attendance at Newburgh, at the general term of the Supreme Court. Mr. Benjamin F. Butler was my opponent, who argued the cause in a very strong and ingenious manner, with what effect yet remains to be determined, for the Judges took the papers. When I heard Mr. Butler lecture upon the Constitution of the United States when I was in college, a notice of which I think was then made in this journal, I had an idea that I should some day suffer from him and I believe he has won the cause.

TO MRS. WM. E. CURTIS,  
% WM. H. SCOVILL, ESQ.,  
WATERBURY, CONN.

Saturday A. M., July 24, 1852.  
I send you dearest Molly my daily buletin of the state of matters here. I have received your note of yesterday and am glad to find you are convalescing. The weather has been very hot, but I waked up last night quite cool for the first time since my return. A sudden change of air has wrought a most remarkable variance in the temperature of the room.

I am now at the office, and very much regret that I cannot come up to Waterbury this afternoon, as I may be obliged any moment by a telegraphic despatch to leave for Buffalo.





[1852 and 1853]

I send Mr. K. a paper with a complimentary notice of Waterbury modes of doing business, under the police head.

Last evening I went out for a walk, strolled down as far as Miss Vanderworts steps where the people were out cooling in the evening breeze. I believe you are kept well posted up, my dear, in all my doings. I hope to meet you soon. Give my love to Alla and Mr. K. and tell them I regret my inability to greet them in person tonight.

Everybody is out of town, and I should find it very dull, if I were not kept very busy. I miss you exceedingly, my darling, but think you will be better off in the country than here. If you go up to Watertown next week, I am afraid you will be obliged to go without me. Hoping you are well and enjoying yourself, I am most affectionately yours,

Wm. E. Curtis.

August, 1852. *Mr. Butler did not win the cause.*

Tuesday, Nov. 2. I have this morning deposited my vote for Franklin Pierce for President and for the Democratic ticket. Very little interest appears to be felt in the Election generally, and I think that General Scott will be defeated. My garden is as yet untouched by frost and winter has not as yet made its appearance.

Thanksgiving Day, November 25, 1852. I passed this anniversary at Watertown.

Christmas 1852. On the 24th, I accompanied Mrs. C. to Waterbury from whence I returned on the 27th. We passed a pleasant and most agreeable Christmas.

New Year's 1853. This day I passed very pleasantly at Cerro Gordo, the country seat of Prof. C. Davies. This is the first New Year's in New York that I have not made calls, but I required and preferred a little more recreation.





[1853]

March 29th 1853.

TO WILLIAM E. CURTIS ESQ —  
106 BROADWAY

WATERBURY,  
Monday Evening.

My dearest Husband,

I sent you a letter this morning which I suppose will quietly rest down town in the Post Office tonight, and be fresh for your perusal tomorrow morning when you send for it. Mr. K. goes tomorrow morning and I cannot resist the temptation of writing a few words to my dearest. How are you getting on without me? You see I consider myself a very important personage. I know you will enjoy having Mr. Kingsbury there with you, but am rather afraid to trust two such wild chaps so long alone together. Will you not come up with him Saturday? If not, send some bannas in your place, just some sweets to console me. Alla I find as crazy on the subject of fruit as I am. We have already devoured a dozen of oranges and Mr. K. has brought us a dozen more. You know I always grow fat on fruit.

Tell Ann where to have the grape vines and trees put out, as Father says it is so warm he thinks they will come this week. I hope you will remember to give Ann the other five dollars.

I did not get a letter tonight but shall hope for one tomorrow. I have been rather conjuring that you must be sick, but you promised to send to me if you were, and you always keep your word.

Good night my dearest love. Dream of me. I do of you. God bless you, my own.

Your loving wife,

M. A. Curtis.

Thanksgiving Day. Thursday, November 24, 1853. I passed this occasion with Mrs. C. at the residence of her





[1853 and 1854]

Uncle, T. A. Davies.\* The frost this day for the first time cut down all the green leaves of my little garden.

Christmas 1853. Was passed most delightfully at Rose Hill. For many years I have not spent a more agreeable day. The next day I tried skating and found that ten years' disuse of skates had not impaired my tastes or capacity for the amusement.

New Year's, 1854. I was in New York, and made several calls, and returned home, cold and weary, and so commenced the New Year. 1853 forever numbered with the past has been a monotonous, prosperous, quiet year with me, and gone with few land marks to record its progress.

Wednesday, April 12, 1854. The events of the past few days will remain for a long time impressed on my memory. On Monday the 27th, Mr. Wm. H. Scovill died at Charleston, S. C. On the 31st, I received the intelligence, and the next day his remains reached this City on their way to Waterbury, where they were interred on the 4th inst. amidst a vast collection of mourning kindred, friends and neighbors.

My saddest office was, the communication of this afflicting intelligence to Mrs. Curtis. No daughter ever loved a Father with more devoted affection, and none ever met with a greater loss than she does, in being thus bereaved of a parent, whose kindness of heart, benevolence, and true Christian life endeared him to all who knew him. He died at peace with all men, and welcoming death as the messenger about to unite him to a mother, wife, and dear children, from whom he had long been separated.

Mrs. Curtis has been overwhelmed by the weight of her calamity, which her situation renders doubly unfortunate, and is now confined to her bed, but I trust will recover without any ill effect —

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\*I think he lived on Broadway. The last years of his life he owned 610 Fifth Avenue and his death at a great age was caused by seeing people jump from the windows of the burning Windsor Hotel.





[1854]

Friday, June 2. Have just been passing a couple of hours with my old friend Sanford, and anticipate much pleasure in his society, if he remains in the United States. Being now the possessor of a horse and buggy I take morning drives and rides, and am improving in health, and am able to spend time enough to occasionally get little glimpses of the country verdure.

While at Waterbury, I went to Harwinton to visit my old yellow nurse, Lovycy. I found her very old and immensely fat, and so enfeebled by the rheumatism, as not to be able to leave the house where she lived with her brother Chauncey. Many years have gone by since the old woman had seen me, and she could not recall in the mature man who stood before her, any resemblance to the sickly boy that in childhood had been so tenderly attached to her. When I told her who I was, she was delighted to have seen me, saying that she often wondered if she should ever see me, but of late years had given up the hope.

When I saw her so poor and infirm, and so changed, I could hardly control my feelings, and when at the close of the interview I left her, I was consoled for many a hard day's work, by feeling that by it I was enabled to contribute something to her comfort in the closing years of life, and which she seemed reluctant to accept.

We drove Charley down to New Haven, and passed the night at Mr. William Smith's from there we drove to Stamford and passed Sunday, and Monday night arrived in New York.

Friday, September 29th. 1854. Thirty-one years of age. Time is hurrying me over life's turnpike. Occasionally I hear some person of more observation than politeness say "You are getting bald, Mr. Curtis." and even the French barber essays to sell me her wonder-working hair tonics, by delicate intimations that "*les cheveux de Monsieur commence a tomber.*"





[1854 and 1855]

November 30. 1854. Thanksgiving. Drove out with Mrs. Curtis. Attended St. George's Church. Dined at Mr. Scudders. Mrs. C. dined at her Aunt's.

Christmas. Passed at home. Wrote some at my lecture, and rode out in warm sunshine a cheval at 3 p. m. Mr. and Mrs. T. A. Davies dined with us.

Wednesday, June 13, 1855. On the 2d inst. I found myself the father of a son, and am happy that both wife and child are now rapidly improving in health and strength.\* I am engrossed, in fact abandoned so fully to my professional occupations that I have no time for any other matters save legal.

TO MRS. W. E. CURTIS,

% F. J. KINGSBURY, ESQ., WATERBURY.

No. 106 Broadway, New York,  
Sep. 6/55.

Cara Sposa,

No letter today. I found quite to my surprise last evening that your Aunt Maria had returned. Mr. Randolph called after dinner, and asked me if I had any engagement in the evening, and I made known to him my orders from you to call at a vacant house as I supposed. He left and down Broadway I went, and found your Uncle, Aunt and happy Miss Vail with Mr. Moore whom your Uncle says she is to marry, all occupied in eating a cold lobster salad. Much love and many inquiries were touched upon in connection with you and the baby. Miss Vail looked thin and light hearted, and Mr. Moore my successor saving Father Hooker, to the attributes of the mansion, appeared like a genuine Long Islander, who reads Burns, quotes Pickwick, and catches trout Sunday and week days. "A very excellent match," said your Uncle Thos. "He lives in the City and his father is old." Somebody "who does business" somewhere "and is rich."

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\*William Edmond Curtis.





[1855 and 1856]

From there I went to the Club, heard Mr. Verplank discuss Rachel, and Howard Wainwright told us about the music, scenery, and poetry of his new Opera, Rip Van Winkle, the first of American Operas which has been three months in rehearsal, and comes out next week. The scenery embraces the views and cascades of the Catskills with clouds rolling about the distant mountains which melt away before the rising sun. Miss Pyne sings as *prima donna*.

Ann tells me, Mrs. Johns called to see you yesterday, looked very thin and pale and was helped up and down the steps to the carriage. If I knew where she was I would go and see her. When you write give my regrets, she left no address on her card. I have sent to Mr. Peck's store to inquire.

Tonight I shall go to hear Rachel in Adrienne Le Couvreure. I have a copy of the play in French and English, and will furnish you with it at the first opportunity if I find it worth the reading.

I am very well, and very busy. Nothing else specially worth noticing. I feel anxious about the baby as you say nothing about how he is in your last and do not write afterward.

Yours affectionately,

Wm. E. Curtis.

Christmas, 1855. On the 21st my Father was attacked with apoplexy and I hastened to Watertown where I found him in an alarming condition, and I passed this day in attending upon him.

New Year's, 1856. I availed myself of this day to again be at the bedside of my good Father who is slowly convalescing from a calamity more fearful than death.





[1856]

(From Mrs. Holbrook Curtis when my brother William was a year old).

WATERTOWN, March 20th, 1856.

My Dear Mary Ann:

Your letter was received and perused with pleasure for which I thank you. We are much more comfortable at present than I had anticipated . . . . I would not exchange darling Willy for any other baby. No! not even with the Bishop. We are waiting for warm weather to arrive that we may again behold the lad, and return his little kiss with interest, please write often and let us know all about him.

Services daily in the church this week. Dr. Holcomb preached last evening. Please remember me to Miss Hayt. Much love to William, and a good share taken out for yourself and Willy.

Your affectionate Mother,  
E. C.

Thursday, May 1st, 1856. My poor Father still remains sadly afflicted, and I make frequent and mournful pilgrimages to Watertown. My health is excellent, and I am working at the top of my speed. I pass many of my evenings very agreeably at the Century Club, and these *reunions* constitute pretty much all the social recreation in which I indulge. My income has increased during the past year, and so have my expenses.

My expenditures during the past year have been ..\$5024.93  
Cash received from professional dues ..... 8035.20  
Cash received from rents, int. dividends, etc. .... 1020.00

Wednesday, May 14th. It is just ten years today, since I went through the solemn ordeal of Examination for admission to the Old Supreme Court of this State, and I yet recall the feeling of pleasure, hope, and buoyancy with which I emerged at 9 P. M. from the rear door of the City Hall entitled to be called to the bar for which I had as it then seemed to me been so long studying. My hopes of pro-





[1856]

fessional success have been more than realized, and as I survey the past ten years, which have slowly gone off the calendar of my life, I cannot but be grateful to the Providential Hand that has guided me so pleasantly and successfully thus far on the journey of life. Where shall I be, and what shall I say when another ten years are recorded as among the past?

Thursday, May 29. The air today is charming and beautiful; a week ago today I attended the dinner given by some gentlemen of the Century Club to Doctor Cogswell of the Astor Library. It was a most agreeable reunion, and capital speeches were made by Mr. Verplanck, Messrs. Cogswell, Bancroft, Higbee, Evarts, Van Winkle, and Mr. C. Bryant. Dr. Cogswell said that in 1836, old Mr. Astor sent for him and said he wished to give to the City of New York some expression of his feelings towards the City where all his enterprises had prospered. He said he proposed to devote \$350,000 to that purpose, and he thought an equestrian statue of Washington would be most suitable. Dr. C. dissuaded him by saying that it was a worthy national enterprise, but that for a private citizen a great library would confer the highest boon upon the City. At Mr. Astor's request he prepared a plan which was approved by Mr. A. and "during the rest of his life it was a subject to which he frequently recurred, conversing with me," said Dr. C. "under the old trees at Hurlgate sitting in the shade in after years."

Sept. 29, 1856. Thirty three years of age today. The great event to me of the past year is that my Father, to whom I have always looked for aid, advice, comfort, and protection, is so stricken down as to be utterly dependent on me and those around him. May Providence remove this cloud from the closing years of his life.

Monday, Dec. 15, 1856. Again a Father. Henry Holbrook Curtis, so named after my deceased brother, was this day born to us. God be thanked for this and all his mercies.





[1856 and 1857]

Monday, Dec. 22. I attended the dinner of the New England Society of which together with the New York Historical Society, Geographical Society, and Tammany Society, I have recently become a member. Brought home at 1 A. M. a bouquet for my wife in a most violent Plymouth Rock snow storm.

During these years my father wrote constantly to his mother and took entire charge of the household in Watertown—His letters are affectionate and interesting but space prevents their addition here—

Friday, May 1, 1857. Very few changes have taken place during the past year. My Father remains in the same melancholy state. As for health and business I have done well the last twelve months.

#### Trip to Richmond

Thursday, May 7th, 1857. Went to Washington, leaving home at 8 A. M. and arriving at 8 P. M. Passed a wretched sleepless night at Willard's Hotel, disgusted with the filthy and vermin infested condition of the house, and was happy to find myself on board a steamboat and inhaling the pure atmosphere of the Potomac at 6 A. M. We passed Alexandria and Mount Vernon, when we were summoned to breakfast, and then until early noon glided along the pleasing shores of the turbid river, when we arrived at Acquia Creek.

At this point a change of Latitude was manifest in the advanced stage of vegetation that surrounded us. All the trees at Hoboken where I crossed the river the morning before, except the willows, were as black and naked as mid-winter, but now they wore the pale yellowish green of expanding foliage. As we left in the cars for Richmond the progress was more marked, and in the venerable town of Fredericksburg, the lilac trees were exposing their flowery beauties.

About the middle of the afternoon we were drawn closely into the heart of Richmond. I dined at the Exchange Hotel, paid my respects to Judge Haliburton, and then sauntered through the streets to the State House





[1857]

Square. A pleasing monument to Washington is being constructed from an *albitic* granite as white and as beautiful as marble, and two bronz statues, one of Jefferson with the scroll and pen of 1776 and the other of Patrick Henry heralding the coming Revolution, grace the State House steps at its side. These statues are destined for the monument, and as I lingered and gazed upon these mute memorials of the mighty past, the last rays of the setting sun giving life-like expression to their dark countenances and colossal forms, I saw the name of Crawford the sculptor, now dying the saddest of deaths in a foreign land, and I could not but think that Genius and Patriotism and Art contend feebly against the grave.

Saturday, May 9th. I attended on business matters in the morning, and visited the State House, which contains the statue of Washington by *Houdon citoyen francais 1788*. It differs from the usual representation of the full-faced, florid complexion that is commonly attributed to Washington. The cheekbones are high and the cheeks sunken. Judge Haliburton informed me that his mother, who was a niece of Mrs. Washington and for many years an inmate of Mount Vernon, always pronounced it an admirable likeness. I had the honor of being presented to Governor Wise at the Executive Chamber. He is a small, pale, wan faced man with long white hair, looking at one moment as if he was thirty five and next sixty five, so variable is the expression of his countenance, which is lighted up by an eye that glitters either from a morbid excitement of the brain, or from a chronic irritation of the nerves. His manner is simple and polished, but rendered disagreeable by the excessive use of tobacco, and his physical system is apparently debilitated by excessive chewing and spitting. He converses eloquently, his eye lights up with courage and excitement, he speaks continuously, no one interrupting or speaking when the subject interests him, but all are fascinated into silence. He addressed me upon the resources of





Virginia, became wrapt in the subject, and after listening for half an hour, I withdrew, leaving him to finish signing the Land Patents upon which he was engaged when interrupted by our visit. He spoke contemptuously of Yankees, and my blood warmed a little as it always does when Irishmen and Yankees are slandered.

The State Library struck me as being only a tolerable collection of books, but the view from the south windows far beyond Richmond, the James River, and its rich valley away toward the pine forests of Southern Virginia, was delightful, and I thought I detected the fragrance of the distant forest as I stood loitering at the windows inhaling the delicious southern breeze. In the afternoon I took a drive with Judge Haliburton, visiting the Eastern Hill of the city, the ancient little church surrounded by its brick-walled churchyard and falling tombstones, in which Patrick Henry breathed forth his memorable defiance to the Crown, and then we went to the large plain house where Chief Justice Marshall passed so many years of his great career. The approach of night found us gathering wild flowers, and looking down upon the turbid yellow waters of the falls of the James River, and lounging under the tall oaks that cluster over the knolls of the Richmond Cemetery.

The next morning I was on my way to Charlottesville, the seat of the University of Virginia, and near which repose the ashes of Thomas Jefferson. The first thirty miles of our road lay through a beautiful, well tilled interval country, the next forty or fifty passed upon the summit line between two rivers, a wretched stunted pine, and exhausted country. In conversation in the cars, I found my neighbor was the son of Mr. Rives, on a visit to his father who lives about twenty miles east of Charlottesville, and that we had many acquaintances in common. He left me at his father's estate on the borders of Albemarle County, giving me a card of introduction to his uncle, Mr. Alexander Rives of Carlton near Monticello. All the land in Albe-







[1857]

marle County was ploughed, no meadows, no pastures, but capital, arable rich soil it was. I found sorry quarters and an indifferent dinner at the Hotel, where I arrived about noon.

After dinner, by the exercise of some patience, and the expression of some impatience, I succeeded in having a venerable vehicle with two good horses and very poor negro attached driven to the door, all at my service. I called at Carlton, truly a beautiful residence, on a gentle hill, the avenue winding up and fringed with trees, and I received a most hospitable reception from Mr. A. Rives. He was to leave in the evening on a canvassing excursion and I declined his pressing invitations to stay in his house.

An ascending drive of two or three miles, part of the distance through a forest, brought us to a heavy ruinous brick enclosure, where sleep the remains of Jefferson; a little up the ascent and we were among the outbuildings that extend along the eastern side of the mansion. Neither the overseer or the overseer's wife could be found, and no one of the black faces and wooly heads that peered out and surveyed us from the negroes' quarters could tell where the keys were.

From the house I went to the grave of Jefferson, but I was not prepared for such a scene of destruction and vandalism. The inscription upon his monument was effaced, the monument itself battered and broken, and like indignities had been offered to the marble slabs which once marked the grave of his mother and other near relatives. Barbaric curiosity seems to be the only excuse for these outrages. Gathering two or three wild flowers that had sprung up amid the wreck, I bade farewell and peace to his ashes, and returned to the village. From here I went to visit the University, and was charmed with the beauty of the site, the extent and character of the buildings, and the air of order and study that prevails. Physically the students were inferior to our young men of the North, more delicately





[1857]

framed and pale, and attenuated, I think, by the *habitual excessive use of tobacco*. In the evening, I attended the Episcopal Church, and on my way home I heard a part of a very eloquent sermon delivered by a young man named Hanson at the Baptist Church. The galleries of the Churches were crowded with negroes, many of them more or less whitened.

After a sleepless night *tourmenté comme à l'ordinaire par les punaises*, I found myself in the cars *en route* for Richmond where I arrived at 2 P. M. Abandoning my intention to visit Norfolk, I prepared to return, and before doing so I hunted up a cousin Robert S. Edmond, with whom I had a very agreeable interview, and then in the midst of a sudden change of temperature, about 48, instead of the 89 of the day previous, I was flying northward. At 11 A. M. I went on board a steamer at Aquia Creek, threw myself on a settee, and covered myself with a shawl. I courted sleep until morning, when again taking the cars I continued my journey until the setting sun left me entering my own door in New York.

Wednesday, May 13th. I received by the morning journals the sad intelligence of the decease of the learned, venerated Chief Justice Thomas J. Oakley —

Wednesday, July 29th, 1857.

New York.

My Dearest Mother,

I hope you are not suffering any ill effects from your jaunt, and that you will escape blistering your face and be all the better for the various perils by flood and field we encountered.

I feel very uneasy about father, and how you will be able to get on, and could not close my eyes until day was dawning this morning.





[1857]

I write to you what the doctors said to me, although it may not be best to be guided by their advice, I think it would be better for us to follow it.

Hoping you are well, I am

Yours Affectionately,

Wm. E. Curtis.

P. S. Don't let any fear of expense or cost deprive you of providing or doing anything you may feel inclined to, for I know of no better use of money than to mitigate as far as it will go the sorrows of sickness.

W. E. C.

I attended Trinity College Commencement, and am informed that I have the honor to be one of the Trustees, but I have remained most of the summer in New York, occasionally driving out to my friend, Mr. Randolph's, at Bayside to pass a day or night.

Christmas 1857

I am alone in my Library and have been reviewing the past. My journal, my books, my taste for poetry, the Drama, Art and the Beautiful, I fear are almost forgotten in the all absorbing duties of my profession. Still, I am cheered with the hope that a day of rest, of pleasing luxurious ease will come, when the tastes and studies of earlier years will supply renewed fountains of enjoyment.\*

A storm of bankruptcy and dismay has for three months utterly paralyzed the country. The banks have recently, in this city, resumed the payment of their liabilities in specie. My income is affected sensibly as that of every professional man by the absolute inability of clients to pay.

My duties have been recently increased by my being elected one of the School Commissions of the 18th Ward, under peculiarly flattering circumstances. But my wife warns me it is time to accompany her to Judge Davies, where the family are collected for the festivities of a Christmas evening.

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\*They never came to any of my family. Holbrook always hoped to have time to paint, William to travel.





[1858]

### New Year's, 1858

I have made sixty-seven calls, and enjoyed the day very much. The sun has shone bright and warm, and the atmosphere has been of the temperature of a pleasant April morning. I drove Charley about rapidly most of the day, and had made all but three visits when I came home to dine at seven P.M. Mrs. Curtis has been receiving calls with Miss Sarah Kingsbury, who has come from Miss Haynes' School to pass the holidays. (Afterwards Mrs. Franklin Carter, whose husband was President of Williams College.)

### Death of My Father

While I was awaiting the opening of Court, Saturday, February 20th, at the City Hall, the judge being detained by the severe snow storm then raging, I received a telegraphic despatch informing me that both my parents were in a very feeble and failing state. I immediately left by the train and reached Watertown about 9 P. M. I first saw my Mother, who was very feeble and exhausted, and then went to my Father's room. I found him motionless and breathing with a painful gurgling respiration, unable to swallow and unconscious except for an instant when, by speaking to him, I aroused him and he welcomed me with a faint smile, but he relapsed into languor and drowsiness and continued in that state.

About eight o'clock, when I was watching alone in the room with him, I saw that his clear blue eyes became leaden and fixed, his florid complexion that had remained through his long illness unchanged, began to assume an ashen hue, and the efforts for breath were rapid and ineffectual. I called in the attendants. The last moment of his existence had arrived, a short breath, a long pause, another feeble attempt at respiration, a long interval in which we waited for another breath, but it came no more, and my Father that had loved me so long and so tenderly had ceased to exist.





[1858]

May it be my lot to pass away as painlessly and tranquilly as he did, and to have my eyes closed by children who love and respect me.

He was buried in the new family place of interment on the Tuesday following, after funeral services at the Church, where the Reverend Mr. Stone preached a very appropriate and excellent sermon.

I shall endeavor hereafter to prepare a little sketch of my Father's life and character, which may be interesting to my children at some future day when, it is quite probable, cut down in harness, I shall have followed him.

May 1st, 1858. I have been computing my expenses and receipts during the past year and find that notwithstanding the commercial depression, my professional income has increased. My professional engagements are incessant, and I suffer pecuniarily from not having time to collect and attend to my income from the same. Thank God I have been blessed with health and strength, and pray for their continuance.

This is the statement for the past year:

Expenditures since May 1, 1857 .....	\$ 6,323.46
Cash received from professional services .....	10,396.37
Cash received from interest, dividends, rent, etc., net .....	3,400.00

Sunday, June 28th. All alone at the house, Mrs. Curtis and the children are at the old mansion at Watertown. I am glad my children can play under the same old maples where we played when children (is it possible?) thirty years ago.

Note — In 1925 they are still there for his great grandchildren.

### Journey to Chazy Lake and Ogdensburg

Friday, August 13th, 1858. At 5 P. M., I was leaving New York and its heat, smells and dust to overtake the





[1858 and 1859]

Scudders, who were three days in advance of me, for the Lakes and Mountains of the Adirondacks. Wm. Allen Butler, Judge Dean and gradually all the numerous friends I met in the car tarried at their summer retreats on the banks of the river, and alone at 11 P. M., I arrived at the Tory House. Refreshed by a good night's rest and breakfast, I left the next morning by train for Whitehall.

(I omit the remainder, he goes to Ogdenburg and sees the Old Davies House.)

Passing the night at Mrs. Ranney's, I returned the next day to Plattsburgh, meeting my friend Thomas H. Galaudet and wife at the cars and passing the day very agreeably.

Saturday, August 21st. At 7 A. M., I took the boat for Burlington. Meeting Professor Webster on board the cars, we passed the day agreeably, he leaving at Castleton. Soon after I entered the Express train at Troy and at 10 P. M., I was at 32nd Street and the gleam of gas lights and the customary suggestions and imprecations of hackmen, aroused me from a drowse and announced that I was in New York.

October 11th, 1858. Francis Randolph Curtis, my third son, was born and so named after my esteemed friend, Franklin Fitz Randolph of this city.

#### Visit to Washington

Saturday, January 8th. I left New York covered with snow in the morning, and arrived at Washington in the evening, where the grass was green in the public squares. Sunday morning I went with Henry S. Sanford to church and strolled about the City. Read Goodrich's *Recollections of a Life Time*. I found at Willard's where I stayed, my kinswoman, the wife of the Honorable Ezra Clark, M.C., from Connecticut, Senator Foster and his lady, Honorable Preston King, and many other charming and agreeable people.

Monday I was at the Senate Chamber and in the Supreme Court. The Senate, how changed from that body





[1859]

where nine years ago I hung upon the eloquence of Clay, and where I saw assembled Webster, and Benton, and a host of others who have gone to their long rest! Called with Sanford on the Honorable Mr. Dixon and on Mrs. Dixon. The day was extremely cold for Washington, mercury probably ten above zero, but I saw Mr. Cass, seventy-seven years of age, walking from his residence to the State Department, in an ordinary dress coat and as unprotected, save for a hat, as he would have been in a drawing room against the inclemency of the day.

Tuesday. Called on Senator Seward and Senator Foote, Mr. King accompanying me. At 1 P. M., I drove out with Mrs. Clark and Mrs. Dixon, and called with them on Mrs. Goddard, Mrs. Judge Wayne and Campbell, and on Mrs. Seton, Mrs. Holly and Bridge and others. In the evening I went with Sanford to the President's reception. The President\* is a large, portly, fresh, full-faced vigorous old gentleman, who gave his hand to all who were presented in a quiet unostentatious way.

Miss Lane, standing in the middle of a semi-circle of ladies and gentlemen, received in a most graciously and queenly manner. Her toilette was elegant and she had the air and bearing of a highly cultured, vigorous, energetic woman. The fresh cheeks, blue eyes and English look, showed her to be the niece of the President. (She had the next house to us in Washington in 1894, a beautiful white haired woman.)

The rooms filled, the band played, beauty, and uniforms, the heroes of the Bench and the Senate, fair ladies, brave men, and German Jew peddlers, all moved along quietly and at their ease in this democratic assemblage.

Wednesday. I heard General Houston in the Senate Chamber reply to Mr. Iveson of Georgia, who charged him with being no representative of the South and as repudiated by his own state. General Houston was cool and eloquent

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\*Buchanan.





[1859 and 1860]

in his reply, and told me afterwards that neither at the bar or in a legislative assemblage had he ever permitted himself to be betrayed into a passion. Called on Mr. Tracey and Mr. and Mrs. George Taylor.

In the evening I went with Mrs. Clark to a party at Mr. Sec. Floyd's. This was a brilliant collection, more so than at the President's reception. Thursday I visited the Smithsonian Institute, and the Patent Office and attended a reception at Mr. —.

November 28th, 1859. My time of office as a School Commissioner expires with the year. Its duties have occupied some of my attention and their discharge has kept me from being utterly surrendered to the law and its details. I am a candidate for a renomination, if my friends wish it, but care nothing further about it. There will be some opposition to it, on the ground that I am opposed to withholding the pay of the Catholic principals. I will never consent to do wrong willingly.

Christmas, 1859

I accompanied Mrs. Curtis and the two eldest boys to Mrs. Kingsbury's to pass Christmas. The children were especially delighted; it was their first visit from home and the first time they had ever seen the country in winter. As we approached within ten or twelve miles of Waterbury we first met snow and then soon fields and hemlocks covered with it, and people travelling in sleighs, Bishop Williams, Reverend Dr. Clark and several other gentlemen passed Monday evening at Mr. Kingsbury's.

Monday, January 24th. I believe I have omitted to record my return to the Board of Education by a majority of twenty-eight votes in some five thousand polled. It was a close contest and some considerable amount of money and cheating was expended in the effort to defeat me. On the 4th of January, I was elected, to my surprise, President of the Board, an office for which I was not a candidate. Last week on Monday I tried a case in Rockland County and had





[1860]

to cross the country to Suffern's Station and return by the Erie Railroad, night express, in consequence of the ice on the Hudson. Friday P. M., I dined at the Union Club. Met among the guests Governor Seymour of New York and General Dix, Baron Rothschild, August Belmont, Abram S. Hewitt, and other political and personal friends of my hosts, George I. Forrest and Mr. Butterworth. After dinner played two hours at whist with General Seymour, General Dix and Mr. Hewitt. I think the young Hebrew with his youth, his German Israelite face, his wealth, title and decoration in buttonhole, was the poorest specimen mentally and physically, that I saw around me at the table.

Thursday, January 26th. Attended another dinner at Professor Davies'. It was given to General Scott, and many of his boys, as several venerable looking gentlemen designated themselves, who graduated at West Point prior to 1819, were present. The evening passed delightfully and the old hero ate, drank and told stories to our heart's satisfaction.

In speaking of the aversion of New England people to mutton, he stated that in the Mexican War the New England regiment preferred to go without eating, than to eat that, though he himself dined well from it in front of his tent. I suppose his example was intended *pour encourager les autres*. Among the guests were Dr. Webster of the Free Academy, Dr. King of Columbia College, Professor Peck, Professor Bartlett of West Point, and T. A. Davies.

#### *Journey to Charleston S. C.*

Some refreshing sleep at the Mills House beguiled away the earlier portion of the day, then came dinner which was followed by rain and a thunderstorm. The house was filled by planters and their families who had either come to Charleston for a few days of recreation, or were attracted by the races. I was struck by the fine appearance and height of the men, and by their courteous and elegant demeanor, while the women had beautiful eyes and fine





figures, but their complexions indicated the prevalence of affections of the liver.

Monday, Feb 6. Before breakfast I rambled over a considerable portion of the town. The gardens, the flowers, the views from the Battery, and the fine old mansions with their roomy grounds and brick enclosures charmed me. It was evident that a century since, it had been inhabited and built by men of income and taste.

In the morning after breakfast, we drove over the bridge to Ashley Hall, the country residence and estate of Col. Wm. Izard Bull. For six miles we hardly saw a house. The road was bounded each side by large pines and oaks, rising from an impenetrable thicket of vines, canes and palmettos, and forming huge arches over our heads, from whence hung the waving, mournful drifts of grey Spanish moss. Occasionally an avenue was opened through to some planter's residence.

At length our carriage, turned to the right, passing through a finely designed gateway, and entering upon a long avenue of nearly a mile in extent. Huge live oaks skirted it, and as we emerged into the park and lawn that surrounds an imposing venerable residence, we were impressed by the size and the beauty of these lions of the forest. Some of them were over thirty feet in diameter, throwing out long tough limbs that in one instance touched the ground in a circle around the trunk of the tree, so that the diameter of the enormous pavillion thus formed was 58 yards.

Col. Bull gave us a most hospitable reception.\* He showed us the house in which he lives built in 1672, and the old house of the original ancestor, in which the unbroken treaty to this day was made with the Cherokees. Two of the family were Provincial Governors of South Carolina, and the estate has never been alienated. He showed us his

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\*When the Yankees entered Charleston he set fire to his house with his own hand so that it should not be taken.





[1860]

grounds which were blooming with violets and japonicas and native oranges, all in the open air. We saw his fish pond, elks in the park with enormous horns, while those that they shed last spring ornamented his hall, bamboos and all spice from the East Indies, and Spanish olives all flourishing. After inspecting a curious Indian mound, about thirty feet high and covered with trees in his garden, the gin where the negroes were ginning cotton, and a fine ante revolutionary monument to one of his ancestors, we returned to the high road by another avenue leading through the cultivated portion of the estate. Here we saw the snug cottages of the slaves, and men and women working in the fields, clearing out ditches and collecting leaves for the compost heap.\* A shower overtook us on our return.

In the evening we went to the theatre, more to see the audience than the Ravees who played, but the house was small, most of the persons who would attend being at a large ball that evening as we were afterwards informed.

Tuesday, Feb. 7. I walked with Mrs. Curtis through the market, the Battery and some of the interesting portions of this strange old town. After breakfast I visited the Charleston Club, the City Hall, where I saw Powers' statue of Calhoun, Trumbull's Washington and some other curious and interesting things. Meeting Judge Pierpont of New York, we visited the Court rooms, and had the pleasure of being presented to Judge Withers, Chancellor Inglis, Attorney Gen. Haynes, Gen. Martin, Col. Philips and Mr. Pettigrew. The last named gentleman is the conceded leader of the bar, 73 years of age, without a white hair in his brown shock that hangs to his shoulders like a lion's mane.

At 1 p.m. we recommenced our journey homeward. After three hours' delay at Wilmington, we sped on through the rain to Portsmouth where we arrived at 4 p.m. finding as we reached there a little snow mingled with the rain.

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\*My mother said it was all spoiled for her by the screams of a negress being whipped. It must have been on the way back to Charleston. I can't believe Col. Bull was cruel.





[1860]

Crossing the river to Norfolk I spent the next day calling on the aged Mrs. Payne, Mrs. Cook, Mr. Robertson and other friends. It was a lovely day.

— remainder omitted

Thursday June 14, 1860. On Tuesday I was called from Court by telegraph to Mrs. Curtis at Watertown. Yesterday at 6:30 a. m. another boy was added to our number and I have today hastened back to my duties leaving both mother and child, thanks be to Providence, doing well. That God may bless him through life is my fervent prayer. (Eustace Sanford born June 12)

### *Journey to Europe.*

Wednesday July 4th, 1860. At 8 o'clock a. m. I left Jersey City on the steamer Asia bound for Liverpool.

Excerpt from letter to Mrs. Curtis. I have cut out the guide book stuff. There is a model of the ship, a side-wheeler, at the museum of the city of New York.

Sunday, July 15th.

The storm cleared away in the night, and a beautiful morning greeted us as we emerged from our narrow quarters and came on deck.

Holyhead and the coast of England were in sight. All day we passed along most pleasantly. The channel was still, steamers and ships under full sail were on every side of us. Church spires, houses, cultivated fields, the new-mown meadows with their hay cocks resting over Sunday were distinctly seen on shore. The mountains of Wales always wrapped in showers, lay on our right.

Presently the fleet that bears the Prince of Wales to Canada came in sight, though we only surmised such to be the fact. An Admiral's ship, followed by the Channel Fleet, ten large ships, in two rows about three miles apart, each ship being about one mile behind the other, with sails set, and rolling from side to side in the long swell was the order in which they were proceeding. Each appeared to be fitted with propellers.





[1860]

We gradually neared the Irish coast, high cliffs with the surf looking like snow drifts twenty feet high as it broke at their feet. Some cultivation appeared, and Bantry Bay where Gen. Hoche landed with the French troops, looked more quiet and inviting.

Thursday, July 19.

Excerpt —

The Randolphins are on the Continent, and Goodridge leaves to join them and I have a letter from Mrs. McLean whom I shall visit soon. I have seen the Tunnel, the Tower, Hyde Park, Buckingham & St. James Palaces. My hotel, Fenton's, St. James St., being in the west end and near them. I have presented part of my letters of introduction. Sir Hugh Cairns took me this evening into the House of Commons, where I heard him, Sir Richard Bethell, Lord Palmerston, Lord Ino Russell, D'Israeli, Sir Charles Napier and others speak. It is late I have just come from there. Tomorrow night he takes me to the House of Lords.

Yours most affectionately,

Wm. E. Curtis.

Excerpt —

In the evening Sir Hugh Cairns, who is the late Solicitor General and the most rapidly rising lawyer in England, went with me to the House of Lords and I remained upon the floor of the House until its adjournment, where I could see and hear everything to the best advantage.

Lord Chancellor Campbell, 84 years of age, presided, sitting on the wool sack (you recollect reading his lives of the Lord Chancellors) and I was told that he showed no trace of his years as far as the vigor of his mind is concerned. He spoke slowly, distinctly, and in a loud, firm tone of voice, but in his big wig and robes he looked to me like a bluff, fresh faced old woman. I heard besides him the Duke of Argyle, and many other conspicuous peers. Physically they are a tall, blue-eyed, fresh-faced, light-haired, and rather stout, fine-looking collection of men.





[1860]

Yesterday, July 21, I saw Madame Tousseaud's wax figures and Napoleonic Gallery, The Royal Exchange and Bank of England. In the afternoon, I went and called on Mrs. McLean, who is about 18 miles from London, living at a quiet hotel in the centre of a beautiful park, and most delightfully situated. It was formerly the residence of the Duke of York and in the grounds I saw the tombstones erected to the memory of 62 of the various pet dogs of the Duchess of York. In the evening I went to the Italian Opera at Her Majesty's Theatre, at the invitation of Mr. Morgan who invited me to a seat in his box. I have also accepted an invitation to dine with them today at 7 p. m.

This morning I went to The Temple Church, a curious monument of the past built about the close of the 12th Century for the Knights Templars. Their effigies with the legs crossed of such of them as were crusaders, lie upon the tops of their monuments. After that I went to St. Swithin's Church, where I heard an excellent sermon to 7 men including the beadle and a baby, 9 women, 18 or 20 charity children and I thought how different this from St. George's.

Tomorrow I hope to receive a second letter from you. E. Goodridge went last night to join his sister at Baden Baden.

Tuesday July 24, 1860.

The dinner at Mr. Morgan's was quite an elegant affair. They live on Hyde Park, in the best quarter of the town, with much more space about the house than we ever see in New York with equipage, liveries, etc.

Yesterday I went to the British Museum, where I could pass a week profitably. After that I went to the House of Lords and heard a portion of the argument of an Appeal before Lord Chancellor Campbell and Lord Brougham and the other Law Lords. After that I went to the College of Heralds and saw some curious things, then to the Royal Academy and then to the National Gallery. Here I saw Turner and Claude's Landscapes side by side. Pictures by





[1860]

Reubens, Guido, Titian, Paul Veronese, Vernet and the Poussins. Turner and Claude's landscapes are much alike in their effect, and surpass anything we have infinitely.

Today I go to Windsor Castle and to Hampton Court to see the beauties of Charles 2nd, if I have time. Mrs. McLean lives about six miles from there, and I hope she will come over and meet me.

It has rained every day I have been in England, usually about ten showers a day. Yesterday it poured every moment. They say it is unusually wet and cold. Mercury rarely rises above 64. I ride about in a cab wrapped up in my cloak.

I hope you are all well and earnestly pray that it may be so. Give my love to all. Kiss the babies and tell them I think of them every day.

Believe me ever yours,

Most affectionately,

Wm. E. Curtis.

BERLIN.

Thursday, Aug. 23rd. 1860.

My dear Wife:

Although it is before breakfast, and quite early, the air is redolent with the drum and fife and bugle, and soldiers are moving in all directions, and thus it is in every capital of Europe. We may be grateful to Providence, that we are free from the insolence of men tricked out in uniform in every place about us, and from being taxed to pay their bills.

I arrived at night at Prague, and had a very pleasant companion for my journey from Vienna, in a young Austrian officer who is an aid of the Arch Duke, and who was as well acquainted with Commander Marsy and our other scientific and military men by reputation, as if he had been educated at West Point.

At Dresden I visited the collection of rare and beautiful paintings and the other collections in the city and the





[1860 and 1861]

localities which are usually visited by strangers, and drove about the city. I also attended a concert in the evening, where the daughters and mamas sitting up straight as arrows and knitting stockings, were listening to the music and talking to the officers who sat about smoking.

Most affectionately,

Wm. E. Curtis.

Wednesday Aug. 15. I went from Venice to Trieste, thence to Vienna, Prague, Dresden, Berlin, Cologne, Coblenz, Mayence, Weisbaden, Frankfort, Baden Baden, Strasbourg to Paris.

Monday Sept. 3. I returned from Paris to London from whence I went to Edinburgh and after visiting Roslyn Castle, Abbotsford, Melrose Abbey and Dryburgh ruins, passed by Sterling and the Lakes, Loch Katrine and Loch Lomond to Glasgow, from where I went to Belfast.

Monday Sept. 10. I visited the Giants Causeway, from thence I went to Londonderry, Enniskellen, Droghide, to Dublin, thence to Hollyhead, to Chester and then to Liverpool, sailing from there on board the Persia on Saturday, Sept. 15th and arriving in New York on Thursday morning, Sept. 27th.

Saturday Sept. 29. Thirty-seven years of age today. I am hardly 48 hours off the deck of the rolling steamer that has borne me safely to home and kindred. Today I assisted at the baptism of my youngest son, Eustace Sanford Curtis, at St. John's Church, Waterbury, by the Rev. Dr. Clark.

Friday, Jan. 4. 1861. This is the President's Fast in view of the imminent danger of civil war and ruin to our country. Heard Dr. Tyng preach. Most republicans deride the idea of danger and Judge Foot showed his contempt for the fast by working all day at the office.

Monday March 25. Went to Philadelphia with Mrs. Curtis, having been ill for two weeks from over work and hard cold, the physician sent me off. Tuesday we went to





[1861]

Washington. Met Mr. Seward, Senator Foster, Mr. Russell, the London Times correspondent and some other gentlemen at H. S. Sanford's at dinner. He leaves to-morrow as U. S. Minister to Belgium. Thursday I went to Richmond. Friday I passed very pleasantly at Robert Edmond's, drove out to his plantation. Attended the sittings of the Virginia convention. Saturday I went to Norfolk via Westpoint, York River and Yorktown. Sunday I remained in Baltimore and returned to New York, Monday, April 1, much refreshed by my jaunt.

Saturday, April 13. The news has arrived of the capture of Fort Sumter by the troops of the Confederate States. Intense excitement exists throughout the city.

Monday, April 15. The President has called out 75,000 militia. The greatest excitement still continues and lawyers are so much engrossed that the business of the courts is neglected.

April 17. Jefferson Davis proclaims that his government will issue letters of marque.

April 19. The President proclaims a blockade of the ports of the seceding states. The 7th Regiment, composed of the flower and chivalry of youth of the City marched at 5 p. m. for Washington, proceeding down Broadway amidst a vast concourse who cheered them and shed tears as the brave boys passed. Wm. Henry Scoville marched as a private, having enlisted two days before. Two or three hours before they left, the news arrived that on this anniversary of the Battle of Lexington, the Mass. Reg. that was cheered yesterday while marching through the streets of New York to Washington, were being treacherously attacked and slain in the streets of Baltimore.

Sunday April 21. I have just seen the march down Broadway for embarkation of the 7th, 12th and 71st Regts. Such an ovation I never witnessed. Many of the recruits had no muskets or knapsacks, and some of them were destitute of blankets.





[1861]

Monday May 13, 1861.

TO MRS. W. E. CURTIS,  
WATERTOWN, CONN.

My dear Wife:

I was glad to hear from you that you arrived safely. This morning is my first intelligence from you.

Saturday P. M. I called at your Uncle Thomas' (General Davies) and accepted an invitation to dine Sunday. When I went I found he had gone to Fort Schuyler to reserve those quarters for his Regiment to drill in. You know he has just been made Colonel of the three years' Regiment from St. Lawrence Co., now encamped in Albany, so I dined with the bereaved ladies, your aunt and Mrs. Julia Davies and endeavored to Make Miss Vail happy who was present, but very sombre.

Wm. Henry came in just at Church time in the morning, says he is well, has got a furlough for a week, had staid at the St. Nicholas Sat. P. M., intends going to Waterbury, looked well but seedy.

I shall come up Sat. a. m. I think. Wish I could now.  
Love to all.

Yours affectionately,

Wm. E. Curtis.

Monday, June 17, 1861.

My dear Wife:

I am just down from Court, I won the cause which is some consolation for having to stay over for it.

I called and saw Mansfield last night, he is on his way to Albany, to try to get Enfield rifles for his regiment. They had sharp work. I believe I wrote to you that I had helped get a new sword for J. York.

Mansfield told me William Mallory behaved courageously. Got a ball through the fold of his pantaloons, and another under his hand when they were lying down, but received no hurt, and that he moved about everywhere





[1861]

in the range of the enemy's fire, seeming to suppose his size freed him from risk. Mr. Raymond was there and I see our conversation made two articles in this morning's Times.

Love to you all.

Yours affectionately,  
Wm. E. Curtis.

### Journal

May 1, 1861. The budget of my fifteenth year of professional labor:

Expenditures since May 1, 1860 .....	\$9,635.05
Cash received for prof. services since May 1 .....	11,319.97
Cash received from int. rent. dividends, etc. ....	8,000.00

June 27th. Attended commencement at Trinity College. None of my class were present. The exercises were for the first time at St. John's Church. Some of the graduating class laid aside their uniforms only to receive their diplomas and some degrees were conferred on those who were absent "inter castra militantem."

Aug. 25. Monday. During the past two months I have been so absorbed in professional and public duties and by the great contest now going on in our midst that I have made but few entries to mark the flight of time. The fourth of July I passed at Mr. Kingsbury's and my family have been at Watertown whither I have occasionally made visits. My principal amusement has been in various excursions about the country to Hartford, Litchfield, Newtown and to the adjacent Lakes fishing. Saturday on my return from a fishing excursion with Mr. Cutler I received the intelligence of the decease of my old and long esteemed friend Capt. Geo. Coggishall. My conscience reproaches me that I have not seen him for a long time. He was always kind to me and the first and most valued friend I made when I went to Brooklyn, a law student. He was a native of Milford in this state (Conn.) His father commanded a priva-





[1861]

teer during the Revolution, and his son one in the war of 1812. As a boy he was on board of the ship that took out the news of Washington's death to Spain. He must be now about 78 years of age. He was a man of sound judgment, tender hearted, passionate, warmly attached to his friends, enterprising, persevering and late in life became an author by publishing some of his voyages and a History of American Privateers. He was warmly and wholly devoted to the cause of his country. He had lived for many years in France and was fond of French literature. Perhaps I am indebted to him in no small degree for the development of my own taste in that respect. As a man he certainly exercised no small controlling influence upon my course of life, but he has gone as others and as all must go. Vale. Vale.

Monday Sept. 2. The tenth anniversary celebrated at Watertown, a few family friends who were at the wedding, dining with us and leaving the customary souvenirs of tin.

Oct. 13. The holding back of winter saves many a good soldier from sickness. Blankets are scarce.

Thursday, Oct 31, 1861.  
New York.

My Dear Wife:

There have been no great changes since you migrated to pastoral scenes. Stocks have risen, and the newspapers state what they term reliable news.

When I sat down excessively hungry to the souvenir you brought me from Watertown my heart smote me and I asked Ann upon what you dined, when she said that you lunched at Mrs. Randolph's and I felt relieved.

I am so much engrossed that I have no leisure to see the sights, but if I had I would entertain you with stories of all the dramatic, musical, and artistic exhibitions now open for the delight and instruction of our benighted fellow-citizens.





[1861]

My present mental emotion, is whether I shall stay in and read the last number of Barber's Reports, or save a fine of a dollar and go at 8 o'clock which is close at hand to the meeting of the Committee on admissions at the Century. I know your prudent soul would be refreshed at my saving up such an amount of silver, and you may depend upon my going.

I am finding favor with the ladies in your absence. A pumpkin pie has been sent to me. Ah! if I was one of what Miss Hayt calls — hem — a minister, I should wallow in doughnuts and cambric habiliments. But the sisters seem rather chilly to poor limbs of the law, and I trust I feel truly grateful for such favors as pumpkin pies.

I hope to come up some time next week to see you all and especially to appreciate the immense improvements that you have had made on the place in my absence.

Give my love to Mother, kiss the children for me and tell them I should like to have them come down and make me a visit.

Yours affectionately,

Wm. E. Curtis.

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NEW YORK,

Nov. 8, 1861.

My Dear Wife:

We have news of another Missouri victory, but to me it reads very much like another bloody repulse. I hope we shall yet have some cheering intelligence. Sanford again writes me almost discouraged by the bad news from home, but he had not then heard of Bull's Bluff. The Independent seems to be preparing its readers and party to back down, after having so materially contributed to bring about the difficulty.

I have seen nothing of the Randolphs, but shall very likely call there this evening.





[1861]

Ann is having the carpets put down, and preparing for your advent. I am so busy I have no time for reading, and hardly for writing you a line.

I was glad to hear from you this morning, and trust you are all well. The News from the fleet is not favorable, it seems some of the vessels were lost, and on the whole people feel gloomy but hope for better tidings.

Kiss the children for me.

Yours affectionately,

Wm. E. Curtis.

(William Whitelaw, the gardener, went to the war and died).

Sunday P. M. Nov. 10th, 1861.

My Dear Wife:

Yesterday I dined at the Maison Doré, a dinner given by Ezra Goodridge to his groomsmen, Mr. Sherwood, Randolph, and myself, so you may easily conceive I did not rise very early this morning. After service I met Mr. and Mrs. Cyrus Curtis on the 5th Av. who forced me home to dine with them. On leaving there I met your Uncle Henry, with his son, William,\* who arrived last night and is looking finely, and the former went with me to Dr. Tyng's Church.

I have just come from Louisa's (Mrs. Henry Scudder) where I took tea with Prof. Peck and Dr. Metcalf. He inquired about you and Willy. Peck and the two Scudders are to dine with me tomorrow.

People are depressed here about the continual bad news from the war, and fear that worse intelligence is at hand.

Give my love to Mother. Kiss the children for me and believe me as ever,

Yours most affectionately,

Wm. E. Curtis.

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\*Augusta Ogden's father.





[1861 and 1862]

### Christmas.

Mrs. Curtis is at Church, the children are busied with gifts that Santa Claus has brought them. We go to Brooklyn to dine at Sam'l. McLean's. War weighs heavily upon this country and England threatens us with her sword. May Providence restore to us the blessing of Peace.

"The Sun," Saturday, Dec. 28th, 1861.

### MILITARY INSTRUCTION IN OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

William H. Anthon, Judge Advocate of this state, who has been preparing for the consideration of the Legislature some amendments to our Military laws, has addressed a letter to Mr. Curtis, President of the Board of Education, asking his opinion as to the advisability of adding military education as a branch of instruction in our public schools. The reply of Mr. Curtis takes strong grounds in favor of the step, and suggests that such acts be passed by the Legislature as shall tend to this result. He very rightfully claims that those educated at the public expense should be willing and enabled to bear their share in defense of the country and its institutions, when assailed.

Saturday, Nov. 15. It will freeze tonight. The first frost will find my artemesias in bloom. God keep our hundreds of thousands of blanketless soldiers who sleep in tents warm. Mrs. Curtis is delayed in Conn. by the illness of the children, and I am half sick from over work. The news of the capture of Beaufort affords some comfort in these times of general depression.

New Year's, Wednesday, Jan. 1, 1862. This was a charming winter day, mild and sunny. Made 65 calls and passed the evening at the Century discussing the unhappy condition of our poor country.

Sunday, Feb. 9. The winter has been mild but very wet. The war as yet moves slowly on. Gen. Scott, whom I met at dinner yesterday at Gen. Davies', says there will be stirring events in the next thirty days. The late successes at Mill Spring and Fort Henry I trust are happy omens. Gen. Swift formed one of the party yesterday, a vigorous, fine looking octogenarian, but much changed





[1862]

from his portrait at the City Hall, painted for the City in 1814. He now resembles the pictures of Bishop White.

Friday, March 28. Saturday the 8th. I went to Washington. Monday I saw the marching off of several regiments in pursuit of the rebels who had left Manasses. The appearance of the troops with their earnest faces, complete equipments and knapsacks and little French tents on their shoulders, indicated that they were not taken by surprise. Tuesday and Thursday I visited our fortifications and the rest of the time I loitered pleasantly away at the Capitol and in a round of visits.

Willard's Hotel,  
WASHINGTON March 9th, 1862.

My Dear Wife:

I arrived at Willard's about 7 a. m. being fortunate to get a small, neat, room in consequence of my having telegraphed.

My trunk was delayed by mistake until now (10:30 a. m.) so that I have only just made myself happy with a change of toilet and bath. I have seen Peck who is here and Woodruff of Hartford, ditto of Litchfield, and Mr. Morse of Waterbury. Prof. Peck will be here some days. It is too warm for a fire in my room and the day is charming. I intend to sally out for a walk. My head does not trouble me as yet, and I hope to put the trouble to flight.

Your Uncle Thomas and Mansfield were here last night, but are over the river today. The rumour is that Leesburgh is taken, and that an advance will be made tomorrow. Young Henry is boarding at Willard's as he is on the Board of Examiners. I hope this will find you all well. I am going out to find a Church.

Love to all,

Yours affectionately,

Wm. E. Curtis.





[1862]

Forty miles south of New York, the snow disappeared and the roads about here appear to be about one half settled. The Sanitary Commission were having their troubles. Dr. Bellows and Mr. Olmstead.

Willard's  
WASHINGTON.  
March 12, 1862.

My Dear Wife:

After writing to you on Monday, I amused myself calling on Dr. Bellows, and Mr. Olmstead, at the office of the Sanitary Commission, and in the evening I went to Mr. Coyle's. His wife resembles Robert Edmond of Richmond, their oldest son is Senior year in college and seems to be a bright lad. They have a daughter 15, and two younger daughters 10 and 12, I should judge. I met their nephew, John Edmond, there, who is a fine looking, intelligent young man. I passed the evening very agreeably and at 10 ½ p. m. made for home, having accepted an invitation to take tea there at 7 ½ last night, thinking I could get through in time to call on Mrs. McClellen.

Yesterday I crossed over into Virginia and saw some of the effects of war, fences and trees chopped and burned, houses dismantled, etc. The roads are almost entirely dry and the weather clear and warm.

Love to all,

Yours affectionately,

Wm. E. Curtis.

WASHINGTON,

Thursday, March 13th, 1862.

My Dear Wife:

By some irregularity in the distribution of letters at the Hotel, I received your letters of Sunday and Monday yesterday afternoon and in the evening your letter of Tuesday, which has relieved me of very considerable apprehen-





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sion. I hope Randolph's case will be the last of it, and that things will go well at Watertown.

If Willy's difficulty is nothing more serious than his teeth, I shall feel very much relieved, and I confide in not taking drugs, and youth and fresh air.

I shall return either tomorrow or next day, probably at 11 p. m. Saturday, leaving here in the 11 a. m. train.

Yesterday after writing you, I walked with Peck over the long bridge into Virginia and inspected some of the works. We called on our return on Mrs. Geo. Woodruff, our member from Litchfield, and after that I had a very pleasant call on Mrs. Dixon.

In the evening I called again on Mr. and Mrs. Foster, saw some trophies, swords, etc., that had been taken from the rebels at Roanoke Island. During the evening I met many persons whom I knew or was introduced to,—Mr. and Miss Parsons of Hartford. She had met me on New Year's at the Godkins. The Woodruffs, Mrs. Alfred Eley, Mr. Brown, M. C. from Providence and Senator Anthony, and I passed part of the evening with Gov. Buckingham of Connecticut, a very agreeable man, and who wishes me to see Henry Kingsbury, or to see him himself, about some Conn. military matters. I also was introduced to Mrs. Gen. McDowell from Troy originally. Do you know her?

This morning I breakfasted with Judge Peabody, and having some cold I concluded not to drive out with him to Fairfax Court House.

Thus I have given you a narrative of the way in which I dissipated the leisure hours here, beguiled neither by cards, whiskey, tobacco or ladies' smiles.

This evening I go to see the McClellens and paying one or two p. p. c. visits conclude my Metropolitan pleasures.

With love to all I am yours,

Most affectionately,

Wm. E. Curtis.

Don't hesitate to telegraph me if you *only wish* me to return.





[1862]

WASHINGTON.

. . . . . Yesterday was a most charming day, but now though it is warm, some rain falls in little showers, then comes a little struggling sunshine, so that the mud increases and thus embarrasses the army movements.

It does me good to see the soldiers that have been waiting months for today, March through Penn. Ave. in the highest spirits, even the little hide bound, weather-beaten horses that have been exposed all winter, caper and frisk in front of Willard's. Every window is open and the ladies have been watching all day, and taking leave and shedding tears has been the rule and not the exception. God knows how many of the fine, young officers that filled Willard's last night and before morning had to march, will ever come back again. There are no conventionalities now, the heart speaks through the lips, and young ladies waive ceremony.

I have seen Dr. Bellows and Mr. Olmstead and I think the Sanitary Commission will soon have more on their hands than they have ever had. No change to the better can be effected here, until calamity comes, and they are yet struggling in vain to have the medical departments reformed.

Capt. Wilkes ridiculed on Saturday to Dr. Bellows the idea that the iron sheathed vessel of the rebels at Norfolk could effect anything. Old commodores have thus far contrived to break up all plans for iron protected vessels, except in a few isolated instances. The last 60 in fact, 30 days, shows that this contest will be decided by iron vessels. I am writing to you a long letter, you need not read it except at leisure, but I thought I would give you the record of my vacation, and show you how well I am employed.

I wish you were here, and if you can come do so, telegraphing me in the morning, so I can meet you. I have been writing so long that I have lost the mail.

Affectionately yours,  
Wm. E. Curtis.





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\*P. S. Don't be surprised if I turn soldier, my heart is in the fight and if I get a good chance I am in for it.

Friday the 14th. I returned to New York not much relieved from the oppression about my head for which the physicians sent me away from New York. I have worked hard this winter and of late have had to lie by a little and I intend to do so more.

Death is busy in the ranks of our profession, war takes some but overworked brains kill the most. Poor John Foot died on the 13th. Another victim of rebellion.

Sunday, April 27th. I add another name to my mortuary record. Mrs. Cutler, the step mother of my father's first wife, whom I have called grand-mother from childhood and with whom is associated much that is pleasant and agreeable. She was a handsome bright, blackeyed old lady, amiable, clear-minded, judicious and impressed me always by the quiet dignity of her manners and the interesting character of her conversation.

Saturday, June 7. The war goes bravely on, but alas, our streets are thronged with hundreds of crippled, wounded and sick soldiers that arrive daily from the South.

Thursday, Aug. 14. The war and the impending draft are chief topics of conversation and public interest. I see no hopes of peace until one of the parties is utterly exhausted and I believe that will be the rebels. Great gloom and depression prevails here in consequence of our reverses. Gold today is quoted at 116 premium. I have passed most of the summer thus far in Watertown and have made some few excursions about the state and one as far as Newport. I attended Trinity College Commencement and to my surprise was honored with the Degree of L.L.D. Most of the students have volunteered as soldiers and the number is less than it has been.

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\*Having a wife, four children and his mother, how could he go.





[1862]

NEW YORK, Oct. 8/62.

My Dear Wife,

.....

I have visited evenings, as I could not read and wished to make the wisest disposition of my flying hours.

Monday P. M. I called on your Uncle William\* and also on your Uncle Nathan's family.

The grapes were most opportune, acceptable and delicious. Accept my thanks.

Last evening I passed at the meeting of the local Board of School officers, fighting ineffectually to prevent wrong, wastefulness and injustice. Things are becoming so bad here that ultimately there will be no protection for property under our present system, I fear.

.....

Yours most affectionately,

Wm. E. Curtis.

Sunday, Jan. 18th, 1863. On Wednesday I was re-elected Pres. of the Board of Education and as usual delivered an Inaugural. The Tuesday previous I attended the wedding of Wm. Scovill at Hudson, all went off pleasantly. I am now laid up with a severe sprain of the ankle but hope to be out in a few days. The war fills us with grief and humiliation.

Sunday, Feb. 8. On Tuesday evening Feb. 3rd, another son was added to my household and I am grateful to Providence that both Mother and child are doing well. (F. Kingsbury Curtis)† The war weighs heavily upon us, and the prospect before us is sad indeed.

Friday, April 3. The first fair beautiful day of spring. I have just returned from Newtown whither I accompanied the remains of my kind old friend Miss Hayt.

Wednesday, July 15. My family have been domiciled at Watertown since the middle of May and I have been making some improvements and repairs at the old Home-

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\*Smith, brother of her step-mother.

†Named for my aunt's husband. None of our family names are perpetuated.





[1862 and 1863]

stead. I have not brought many suits of late, the depreciation of the currency operating in such a way as to prevent litigation.

The war drags its slow length along though we have been much enlivened by successes at Gettysburg, Vicksburg and Port Hudson during the past few days. At the moment everything is depressed and all patriotic men pained, if not disheartened, by the violence and outrages of a mob in our midst for the past three days, in opposition to the enforcement of the conscription. Mrs. Curtis left Watertown with me yesterday morning to come to New York. At Waterbury, W. L. heard there was a riot the afternoon before in the City. At Bridgeport we found railway and telegraphic communication cut off. Mrs. Curtis returned after several hours delay and replacing the track at Mount Vernon where it had been torn up by some local rascals. We reached the Harlem Bridge; this was closed. The passengers procured a small steamboat to transport them to Peck slip, thence I proceeded to the Academy of Music where I should have presided at the Commencement then to have been held, but which was postponed. On my way up I met citizens armed and drawing cannon through the streets and upon my arrival at my house I found the servants almost overcome with terror. The mob had just fired the Station House near me, which burned unchecked, and great numbers of rioters had been shot during the day in the vicinity. God help our country which has to drain cup after cup of the bitterest humiliation.

MRS. W. E. CURTIS,

WATERTOWN.

106 Broadway, July 16/63.

My Dear Wife,

I expected to have heard of your safe arrival at Waterbury this morning but not having done so, I suppose the mails are cut off.





[1863]

No trains ran yesterday. The rioting still continues and as plunder appears to be their main object it may continue for some time to come. We are pretty near the scene of heavy fighting and firing, and I am glad you did not come down.

I suppose I shall be on duty tonight, as we are organizing to protect our houses in the vicinity. Mr. Stearns and Mr. Tyng seem to have disappeared. The former got a phaeton on Tuesday afternoon and with Mrs. Stearns retreated to New Jersey, but has returned and was on duty in the 20th ward last night.

I was so tired from being up Tuesday night that I slept through the infernal din last night, my last recollection is of two gangs of ruffians marching by singing "Oh by joyful, joyful, etc."

The cowardice, and running away, displayed by most of the wealthiest portion of the community, is a great encouragement to these rascals to continue to plunder. I think we have now seen the worst of it, as the soldiers are coming back to the city and I see the stages and cars are commencing to run today.

With much love

Yours affectionately,

Wm. E. Curtis.

NEW YORK, July 18, 1863.

MRS. W. E. CURTIS,  
WATERTOWN.

My Dear Wife,

The receipt of your note of yesterday relieved me of great anxiety. The words "all well" at the close of the letter conveyed most grateful intelligence.

Last night it rained fearfully and the city was quiet, but all about us it was patrolled by the military who were for the first time not fired on in the Avenues.





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I saw Gov. Seymour at Head Quarters this morning at the St. Nicholas. He looks pale and worn, but has labored most assiduously and vigilantly to allay the passions of the mob. He says that is now all over. I hope so, but there are hundreds of rifles taken from the armory in 2nd Ave. yet concealed along the 1st Ave. and which may be used at any day.

Mr. McLean has returned. I told you yesterday. I saw him this morning and he seems in good spirits and very busy. Mr. Randolph has called to have me pass Sunday with him at Spuytendivel and I think I shall go up this evening and return Monday, as Margaret says she is "no longer afraid much."

They will send me down if I am wanted tomorrow. Not a dollar of our property and not a colored school has been lost or burned.

I shall not come up before Wednesday. If you come down Tuesday morning I will stay over until you go up. You can tell when you get Monday morning's papers if it will be safe for you to come to the city. I think it will be.

Love to all. Kiss the children. Tell me how Alla gets on.

Yours affectionately,

Wm. E. Curtis.

Sunday, Oct. 11/63.

98 E. 15th St.

MRS. W. E. CURTIS,  
Watertown.

My Dear Wife —

Yesterday I dined with Mr. Cyrus Curtis who is alone at his house. This morning Frank Goodridge was in our pew and an unknown lady who I think possibly considers it as her exclusive domain. Your Uncle Charles and wife appeared during the morning service, and shortly before or





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after them your Uncle Nathan and wife took a seat with me. They seemed to be pleased with the sermon and inquired after you and the children.

I must tell you about the reception. I saw many people there I knew, Miss Haynes and Miss Darragh, Mrs. Godkin, Mrs. Hutchins and Mrs. Clift, Dr. Webster, Mr. Kirkland, Judge Sutherland Hilton, Mr. Godkin, Charles Brace, Dr. Lieber, and other gentlemen too numerous to mention. The ladies I met inquired about you. I was invited to make up the assortment, and so I amused myself highly. The quadrille after supper was opened by Sir Alexander Milne, a Scotchman 6 feet and 3 inches, thin and sixty, in brilliant English uniform, gold lace and epaulettes, star on his left breast, and a broad red ribbon around his neck. And Mrs. Cyrus Field, I think. Mr. David Dudley Field danced with Lady Milne, a fat, fair and forty, well preserved good looking English woman. Admiral Farragut was the brightest looking officer in the room and though near sixty, and dressed in the simple frock coat and sholder straps of our uniform, danced the best and looked the best of any officer in the room.

I had some conversation with the Russian Admiral, who with his officers made a brilliant appearance. Many Diplomatic and Consular uniforms were there, and in fact we black coats were in the minority. The refreshments consisted of punch, ices and I believe some wines. It was nearly two o'clock when I reached home in my two legged coach and stick.

Mrs. Godkin said that they lived at I believe No. 37 E. 19th Street. Mrs. Clift seemed to be as much admired and as much au courant as any lady there. Among the celebrities were Mrs. Gen'l. Banks, Mrs. Marshall O. Roberts, and others too numerous to mention.

I was about as much interested in looking at a tall thin, white haired old man, whose nose and chin almost met, and who was as straight as an arrow, from Tennessee, Amos Ken-





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dall, who has had his name, in his day, in the newspapers as much as any man in the Country and who you recollect (I am too young to remember it) was one of the Cabinet of Gen. Jackson.

Now, I have told you all about the reception, so that you are better off than if you had been there.

My head is more comfortable, and I have twice this week slept by taking one of the little pills Dr. Thomas prescribed about a year ago.

I am hard at work again, and I am reaping some of the fruits. Was paid \$700 last week, and should send you a check if I were at the office. I enclose you the check you sent to me, as you may need it. Endorse it before you use it. I had no letter yesterday and have just returned from a fruitless visit to the P. O. today. I hope you are well and will bring you a Dictionary. Give my love to the boys and say I am glad they are doing well at school.

Yours affectionately,

Wm. E. Curtis.

Monday Nov. 30th. Snow falls today, the first of the season and covers the geraniums and artemesias now flourishing in the garden. Tomorrow I am again before the people a candidate for re-election to the Board of Education. I rather hope I shall be defeated and I feel quite confident I shall be.

#### Death of My Mother.

Dec. 13, 1863. On Wednesday afternoon I received a telegram from Doctor Munger that my "mother was very low." It was too late for the evening train. I left by the morning train. At Waterbury, Mr. Kingsbury met me with the sad intelligence that she died at half past two a. m. I was too late, but on my arrival at Watertown, her remains yet preserved a life-like countenance. They told me that she seemed to be improving until Tuesday night and therefore did not send me word, that her mind seemed occasionally to wander Wednesday evening, that during the day she





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was distressed for breath, but about midnight fell asleep and passed away without further suffering. She supposed she would die, and Tuesday sat up in bed for 3 hours and accurately reckoned up her accounts, and made many little memoranda of matters for my convenience, and not being advised of Mrs. Curtis' illness, she every day watched the stage and post, expecting a letter or that she would come, and at each disappointment expressed her apprehension that she was ill.

The telegram was sent, so that if it had been delivered in season, I should have reached there about 8 o'clock in the evening. Before she died, she inquired at every sound if that was I coming and towards the last fancied she heard the wheels of the carriage bringing me. But alas! we were to meet in life no more.

She was buried yesterday by the side of my Father. The services were performed in part at the church where the Rev. Dr. Lewis preached a sermon. My son Willy and a niece, Mrs. Burdick, who came by chance upon a visit a few hours before the funeral, and myself, were all of her blood who came to the funeral and we stood together, as at noon with the snow fresh upon the ground, and the clouds dark and moist above us, her coffin was slowly lowered into the grave prepared for it.

Thus passed away one, who was by nature kind, tender and affectionate and from whom I never received a blow or an angry word, and to whom I am under immeasurable obligation. Farewell Mother! Parents and childhood's home are among the shadows of the past.

### Christmas.

A clear, cold beautiful day, drove with Mrs. Curtis and the children in Central Park and stopped to witness the crowds skating upon the various Lakes.

Monday, Jan. 4, 1864. Mrs. Curtis and Willy and nurse sailed by the steamer Corsica at noon to-day for Nassau.





[1864]

A little snow has quietly fallen since but no wind has sprung up and I trust they will have a pleasant passage to a warm climate and that Mrs. Curtis will return restored to health. I should have liked to have gone with them but my engagements here forbid.

#### Journey to Nassau.

Monday, Feb. 29, 1864. Mrs. Curtis and Willy being at Nassau, and invalids, I left at 3 p. m. today on the British Steamer Corsica, to go down and pass ten days there, and make them a visit. The sky was overcast, air cold and raw, and a snow storm threatening. The little propellor, without freight and a round bottom would evidently roll badly, but fortunately the sea was smooth and though crowded with passengers, three in a stateroom, we passed a comfortable night.

Friday, March 4. Sunshine, hot air, and a heavy sea which gradually diminished. 10 a. m. saw the island of Eleuthera to the east of our course. 3 p. m. arrived off Nassau. 4:30 p. m. crossed the bar and anchored. Could see the bottom at 60 feet. Island covered with green shrubbery to the water's edge, except about the town which is filled with gardens and stone houses surrounded by piazzas. Back of these rise the heights crowned by forts, the Government House and the Hotel.

The harbor was full of steamers painted grey and fitted out to run the blockade to Wilmington. Saw one of them steaming out as we came in sight of Nassau. The negro boatmen fought, brandished knives and vociferated oaths and after hour's delay and being splashed with water I landed, reached the hotel and had the unspeakable happiness of finding Mary Ann and Willy well.

Saturday, March 5. Clear, hot, mercury 75 in the shade. Drove out in the morning and afternoon with Mrs. Curtis. Saw palm trees loaded with cocoanuts, bananas, oranges, etc. growing in profusion. Called on Mrs. Leer with Mrs. Curtis.





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Sunday March 6th. Attended service at the Cathedral, and heard a sermon from one of my late fellow passengers, The Bishop of Nassau, Dr. Venables. Walked out to a negro village with Dr. Kirkwood in the afternoon and in the evening to the esplanade with Mrs. Curtis. Listened to the music in the cathedral.

Monday March 7. Drove to the lakes with Col. Davies, Dr. Cummings and some other gentlemen. Walked on the shores, gathered some varieties of orchidaceous plants. Dined in a piazza of a ruined house in the midst of orange and lemon trees struggling for life with the encroaching forest which now covers what once was a sugar estate. Returned at dusk bringing with us some boughs laden with oranges and lemons, also a mahogany bough. The undecayed portions of the piazza were of wood which seems in this locality to be very durable.

Tuesday March 8. Drove to Foxhills with Mrs. C. and Willy, a settlement of native Africans. Visited a rich looking school of young Congoes. They are very industrious, bought some shaddocks and sappodilloes of the women. Returned in rain which fell moderately till evening.

Wednesday March 9. Visited the caves about ten miles to the westward with Mrs. C. and Willy and found them interesting and the bottom covered with guano from the numerous bats and birds that have had lodgings in them for centuries. Gathered wild flowers and some seeds to try at Watertown, also some of the small red beans growing wild from which the negroes make scarlet beads. Ate some of the fruit of the prickly pear, not good. Upon our return called upon Mrs. Leer, Gov. Bailey and lady and upon the Bishop and Lady.

Thursday March 10. Drove with Mrs. C. and Willy over a stony road through forests of pine and palmettoes to the South Bay. A scene of wildness and desolation and with no vestiges of civilization, except fragment of a wreck





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lying upon the beach. Brought home some shells. Attended a pleasant party at Judge Doyle's in the evening where I met many agreeable residents of the Island.

Friday March 11. Went with Judge Doyle and visited the public schools and public buildings and library and court rooms and also some handsome stone houses he is erecting. Dined at Dr. Kirkwood's and remained late playing whist. Fourteen gentlemen at table, among them Judge Doyle, a very intelligent colored barrister, Mr. Dillet, and the Col. of the 1st West Indian Regiment.

Saturday March 12. Drove with Mrs. C. and Willy to the Eastward, visited the market. Called on Dr. Kirkwood and Judge Doyle. Drove out with Mr. and Mrs. Darling after dinner and passed the evening with them. Was struck by the immense size of the rooms of his house.

Sunday March 13. The past three days and to-day mercury 60 in the shade. Called on Judge Leer with Willy. Walked in the evening on the piazza of the hotel. Beautiful moonlight. Made preparations to leave in the morning.

Monday, March 14. Corsica anchored off Nassau at daylight. Went on board at 10:30. Sailed at 2 p. m. having waited till then for the mails. Weather warm, sea tranquil. Sailed near Abaco Island and lights during the dusk and the evening. Passed a pleasant night with heavy showers.

Friday, March 18. Land in sight at 8 a. m. Pilot came on board at 9 a. m. Wind South, sea calm. I p. m. off Staten Island. 2:30 p. m. at Jersey City. Hurried my trunks through the custom house officer's inspection and reached home at 3:30 p. m. where I received the sad news of the death of little Willy Kingsbury the day after I left and whom I had seen two days before never looking better. Found Mr. and Miss M. V. Kingsbury at the house. Thank God, children all well.





[1864]

106 Broadway, New York.

Monday, April 18/64.

My Dear Wife,

Since I last wrote I have heard from you again by the Corsica, and am glad to hear that you and Willy, though suffering from cold, had thus far escaped every thing more serious.

I am daily grateful to Providence that our children keep well. We have not had a doctor at the house but twice since you left, and all of them are doing so well that I shall keep them here until the first week in May. But when I see what I have written it alarmed me and I expect I shall catch it for having remarked upon it.

Mr. H. S. Sanford is in the City. He dined with me one day last week and wishes his kindest remembrances conveyed to you, *as, my Dear, everybody else who knows you does.*

(Then follows a great deal about the Kingsburys and mama's baby who was staying there, also news about Aunt Maria Davies and the Randolphs.)

Miss Sophia Goodridge I suppose is made happy by Fred's success, as the boys tell me he is to be married in a few weeks and go to Europe. The lady is Miss Grosvenor, the wealthiest heiress in the Country, and in addition to being a *millionaire*, is *beloved* by every one as being a most amiable, and highly cultivated, and intelligent lady. The courtship has been an affair of years, and the marriage is one of *hearts*. I observe Miss Taintor, a Hartford heiress, is visiting there, and that casually the young deacon that is to be, in June, has a little vacation from his studies and is here. Mr. R.\* has bought the place next the one he occupied last summer and which was then occupied by Mr. W. E. Dodge. This Mr. R. says in view of Architects, masons, etc. that Madam has sent there, will keep them all summer happy in a state of repairing.

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\*Mr. Randolph.





[1864]

The fair for the Sanitary Commission you doubtless read much of. I have been there twice. The first time I went at 11 A. M. and saw the pictures, a splendid collection. Miss Edwards, Miss E. Willard, Mrs. Clark Mary Hopkins that was, Miss Wilson, Miss Perkins, and so many people were there that I knew, that I did not stay long. In the evening I went to the shanty before the Everett House where the Hartford table is, and where I saw Mrs. Bull, Hutchins, and Churchill. Among other things they stuck me with an embroidered baby blanket at \$10, though I assured them that we had no use for it. I shall mail this and write again before the steamer leaves. All well and I hope you are. Kiss Willy and accept a thousand for yourself.

Yours must affectionately,

Wm. E. Curtis.

Friday, August 18th. I returned last evening from the Thousand Island where we had been for nearly two weeks. Mrs. Curtis enjoyed the fishing and rowing among the Islands. We passed each day in this way with our friends, *Dr. and Mrs. Thomas*, the boatman cooking our fish on some pleasant island where we would land in the shade to dine.

Note by Elizabeth Curtis 1925

(I have dwelt so much on Connecticut that although it is eighty-three years since my father came to New York there is scarcely space for a true picture of the family life after his marriage. It was always full of color and never dull or stodgy. From the first my parents knew interesting people, and in those days New York was so small, that an attractive young couple was not lost sight of. Notwithstanding all of mother's babies, she went to a number of, as she described them, delightful parties. At one at the home of Mrs. Jacqueline Smith's mother, Mrs. Campbell, they were asked to spend the evening and see a statue recently





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sent from Rome. After looking at it and meeting about thirty people, tea and thin bread and butter were passed at ten o'clock and at eleven all went home. "In those days," she said "people knew how to talk" The boys as they grew old enough were sent to the red brick Quaker school on Stuyvesant Square, and when the City disagreed with them they were packed off to Watertown where the house-keeper-governess Miss Powell and the old nurse, Anne Laurence looked after them. My grandmother taught Will his Greek alphabet when he was four, which beat our record for precosity.

After 1860 my mother was sent to the South (Nassau, Aiken or Charleston) every winter for her health and she usually took one of the older boys with her and sometimes one of the babies. My father's letters to her are delightful and make one see what a thoughtful, affectionate man he was. In those I include here to give an idea of his life outside his practice, I have omitted the long accounts of the activities of each child and the domestic details. The atmosphere at home was always one of great hospitality. Each of the five boys seemed to bring back one or two friends for every meal. I can just remember the place seething with youths of all sizes.

The 20th Street house was very stately with high ceilings, Italian decoration and red damask hangings. The day my mother gave a reception or dance for her *débutante* niece, Alice Kingsbury, I was hurried into a little knitted jacket and taken down to see someone before the company arrived. There were certain tricks they always made me do and the boys taught me slang before I could speak. I remember distinctly when about three sitting on my father's lap and feeling so safe because he was big and tall. That, then, is the picture, — a big distinguished father with a cultivated voice and grand manner, a small charming mother and five splendid sons. The two little girls were not taken very seriously, the boys were what counted.





[1864]

Journal.

September 29th. Forty-one years of age. I passed the day at Watertown with my boys, the feeble health of the mother compelling her some two weeks since to seek the milder climate of New York. The immense sacrifice of life produced by the war seems to create a general disregard of Time and Life, which I so far feel, that I have ceased to read over the records of my birthdays when a new one occurs, and as year after year hurries me to the expiration of my life lease, I learn to look upon it as the event which is hourly happening to most of my friends and neighbors, with the briefest note and warning.

Wednesday, December 28th. I have today followed to the grave the remains of my old preceptor in the law, Wm. Curtis Noyes. I was a student in his office when I commenced this volume. Thursday last I met him at a meeting of the New England Society, he was elected President and was present at the dinner in the evening. I thought I never saw him appear in better health. The next morning he was prostrated by apoplexy when arising and remained insensible until his death Sunday noon. He was only 59 years of age, but his brain gave way under the pressure of unremitting labor for many years. He knew nothing of rest or recreation; his cases, his library, his family and immediate friends engrossed every thought and every moment. Learned, clear headed, calm, amiable, courteous, persevering, conscientious, he stood in the foremost ranks of the profession, without genius and without early advantages, but endowed with admirable perseverance and a sound judgment.

Friday, December 30th. I have just returned from attending the funeral at St. George's, of Mrs. Scudder. She was one of the bridesmaids when I was married, Louise Davies, and the first of the company of eight that has fallen. Gifted with beauty, genius, and the graces of a Christian





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character, she leaves an affectionate husband and five little children to bewail her loss.

I was at the meeting of the bar this morning in reference to the death of Mr. Noyes. Bradford, Field, G. S. Curtis, Vanderpoel, Brady, and O'Connor spoke.

Monday, January 2nd, 1865. The New Year's Holiday was today observed. Mrs. Curtis, Sanford and nurse, left in the steamer Corsica early in the morning for Nassau. God send them a pleasant passage. On my return from the steamer I made calls throughout the City. Dined at Mrs. Randolph's. Passed the day pleasantly.

Monday, April 10th. The papers this morning announced the welcome intelligence that General Robert E. Lee had surrendered the rebel army of Virginia and that Peace is at hand. A week ago we received news of the capture of Richmond and Petersburg, and I earnestly hope and pray that a few weeks more will end this bloody war. The Government has had a long series of military successes, and the Rebellion must succumb. Mrs. Curtis, who is still in Nassau, will be delighted with the news. We have had a dreary, cold, severe winter, and during January and February I was chiefly confined indoors by a severe cold, and even yet my throat is so sensitive that I dread resuming the trial of causes.

Sunday, April 16th. This is a sad Easter Sunday. The City is a scene of mourning. From public and private buildings the flags float at half-mast, and columns and windows are draped with mourning emblems. President Lincoln lies a corpse, the victim of a cowardly assassin, and Mr. Secretary Seward, and several of his household, are at the point of death, victims of one of his accomplices. He was taken away at the moment when the country, regardless of party, looked to him with Hope and Confidence. Providence will guard our future.

Sunday, September 10th. Mrs. Curtis returned from Nassau May 12th, much improved in health. The chil-





[1865 and 1866]

dren and Miss Powell went to Watertown in a few days after. Willy is to commence his Latin tomorrow, ten years old. How it carries me back to the days of *Penna*! I have just received a notice of the death of my old friend, Eugene Jean Jaquet of Neufchatel, and must write to his wife, but what a trifle is it in the way of consolation to the widow and the fatherless children.

Friday, September 29th. Forty-two years of age today. Passed the day engrossed in my usual avocations. My pleasure upon lying down or waking up is the thought that war and death and desolation are staid, and that peace and happiness are again smiling upon my beloved and united country.

Thursday, December 7th. This day is by the recommendation of the President observed as a Thanksgiving, and never had a nation more cause to observe it. Mrs. Curtis and the two youngest children are here, and the rest are at Watertown. Tuesday I attended the funeral of young Major Chas. F. Davies, who returned shattered in health from serving honorably in the Army, to linger a few weary weeks at home and then die.

Above is the notice of the marriage of Miss Kingsbury, a long cherished friend, and for whose welfare my prayers ascend. (Uncle Fred's cousin married Comte de Giverville)

Wednesday, January 31st. Went with F. J. Kingsbury to Washington. Thursday, P. M., we went with Professor Davies and Judge Davies to receptions at Secretary McCullough's and Secretary Morgan's. Met General Thomas Meade and other Military and civil celebrities. From Senator Morgan's, Mr. Kingsbury and myself went to the French Minister's, M. le Marquis de Mouthon, where we met chiefly members of the Diplomatic Corps. Friday we drove to Arlington House and the Soldiers' graves. In the evening, we called on Senator and Mrs. Lane, and then supped at Mr. Coyle's. Saturday evening and Sunday —





[1867]

we passed the former at Mr. Pollak's and the latter at General Ramsay's. Monday attended Mrs. Dixon's reception, called on Miss Foot, and in the evening we went to *General Grant's*. Here we saw the hero, his wife and father, and a crowd of celebrities. Tuesday returned to New York.

Friday, Feb. 28/67.

My Dear Wife,

I received your letter yesterday and have told Willy to give the chair to your Aunt Maria.

I dined again with Mansfield and his wife at The Clarendon, and afterward went to call on Miss Campbell who with her Papa inquired after your welfare.

The Judge\* was to have given a dinner to Gen. Grant yesterday but as he did not come it is postponed until next week. Mansfield says he was not invited, "only desirable people," so I suppose it was a political dinner.

The Prof.† came down as he did not get the news of the postponement.

It has ceased snowing, but is cloudy and thawing today. I go up to see if I can get the horse exercised a little, as I feel very anxious about all and especially that portion of my family. I get no letter today.

Rachel seems to do very well, and Marguerite is engaged in the pious work of converting her to the Catholic, Roman Church.

Remember me to Mr. Cornish when you see him and I hope the cross back of the pulpit has ceased to scandalize the Aiken Christians.

I hope you are all well, and that you and Holbrook will not make each other sick.

---

\*Henry Davies.

†Prof. Charles Davies, then at West Point.





[1867]

Regular meals, regular sleep, and our boys are well. But when they come under the pressure of school, Circus, and other City excitements they have to succumb.

Nothing charged for medicinal advice at this office!

Yours affectionately,

Wm. E. Curtis.

Sunday, September 22nd. Yesterday I attended the funeral of my old and tried friend, Franklin F. Randolph. I was at his house where he died on Wednesday morning. He was a just, conscientious, honorable, even tempered, generous man. I trust my son, who is named from him, may be enabled to follow his example. He was buried at Woodlawn Cemetery near the grave of his brother-in-law, Ezra R. Goodridge, another near friend who preceded him but a few short weeks.

Sunday, September 29th. Forty-four years old today. Attended the opening services at St. George's Church. A beautiful restoration. The chipped walls alone show the effects of the fire. Dr. Spring, at Dr. Tyng's request, made the closing prayer.

Wednesday, October 2nd. This morning between 3 and 4 o'clock a daughter was born to me. May God pour his blessings upon her and preserve her to be the joy and comfort of my old age. (Mary Alathea Curtis)

Thursday, November 28th. Thanksgiving. A rainy day. Dined at home with all my family.

Wednesday, Christmas. Pleasant. Walked four miles in the morning. Then drove to the Central Park with Mrs. Curtis and the children to see the skaters and curlers. Passed the day at home.

Thursday, January 16th. Twelve noon left for Washington, arrived 10:30 P. M. Friday. Attended to my cause in the Supreme Court. Called on Mrs. Coyle, Mrs. Dixon, and in the evening on Judge Clifford. Ordronaux passed the evening with me and Saturday morning I strolled with





[1868]

him about Washington and in the evening returned to New York.

The Bowery, N. Y., Feb. 22/68.

My Dear Wife,

We are all well and the baby\* I see daily and it is growing in beauty and wit.

I saw Mrs. Foster Thursday evening at Mrs. Stoughton's and many people there and at Peter Cooper's whom I knew and who asked about you. I gave your message to Mrs. Stoughton who desired me to let her know when you were in town so that she could call.

The Leslie's were there and Davies

Yours affectionately,

Wm. E. Curtis.

Sunday, Dec. 20, 1868.

209 E. 15th St., N. York.

My Dear Wife,

I was very glad to receive on Saturday your two letters informing me of your safe arrival in Nassau and that you were all well — The house was dismal enough after you all left and it was some days before I could endure dining there by myself. The week following, I was very closely confined by business engagements, and last Sunday I drove with Mr. Clift to the Park, and dined there in company with Rev. Dr. Weston and Mr. Lydig Suydam. This is the only dinner or entertainment I have participated in since you left, except just before dinner, I attended for five minutes a reception at Miss Demings, Mrs. Moore's, Mrs. Stuart's, and Mrs. Sherwood's. There were immense crowds at the two latter houses, but for certain reasons, viz., hunger, no time to make toilette, etc., etc., I simply made my bow and left after saluting the mistresses of the house.

You will see by the papers, the death of one of my Club confreres, Judge Robertson, a genial gentleman, and whom I am sorry to part with.

---

\*Mary Alathea.





[1868 and 1869]

Today it rains, freezing as it falls and either the girls or Michael have shovelled about a barrel of saw dust over the front steps, to the amazement and horror of the old Quakeresses who are just trotting home from meeting, and who, avoiding stepping in the mess, look up aghast at the grocery taste of the proprietor of the door-plate. John Ordronaux stayed here Monday and Mr. Kingsbury Thursday.

Yours affectionately,  
Wm. E. Curtis.

Wednesday, December 23rd. I am the sole member of the family staying in New York. Mrs. Curtis and Holbrook and Kingsbury left on the 31st instant for Nassau. where I learn they arrived safe and are well. Tomorrow I leave for Connecticut to pass Christmas with the other children. Thanksgiving we passed very pleasantly at Watertown.

Christmas 1868. Passed the day very pleasantly with the boys at Mr. Kingsbury's. The morning previous I passed the smoking wreck of St. John's Church where I was married and my six children baptized.

New Year's 1869. a most fearful snow storm blowing violently all day. Made 25 calls and then abandoned from pity for my horses and coachman, and suffering from exposure and soaked feet.

209 E. 15th St., New York,  
Sunday P. M., Jan. 10, 1869.

My Dear Wife,

Willy wrote you his letter the early part of the evening and I thought now that he and I have been out visiting I would drop you a line . . . . .

After dinner and letter writing we went to the Century and saw the pictures, and thence to your Aunt Maria's where we had a pleasant call but brief and then to Doctor Thomas. He and his wife had just returned from a drive to Staten Island. You are aware, I suppose, Mrs. Lapsley has a





[1869]

daughter as well as Mrs. Scudder, about three days difference between them. Dr. Metcalfe came in while we were there. Dr. Thomas said he never saw a boy who had improved as much as Willy has in the time since he saw him. His cheeks are red and he is a head as tall as Frank Goodridge, as I observed at Church. So much for today's sin and wickedness.

I dined at Mr. Stoughton's once, at dinner of Committee on nominations at the Century, and I declined an invitation to dine at Dr. Thomas'. This week I have cards to a dinner by the Bar to Mr. Gerard on his retirement from practice, also to Dramatic Fund Ball, and Feb. 2 to Charity Nursery Ball where I shall go all as brave and very much like a beggar on horseback.

Last night received letter from Miss Powell, which I enclose. Kiss the boys from me.

Yours affectionately,

Wm. E. Curtis.

209 E. 15th St., New York,  
Sunday, Feb. 7, 1869.

My Dear Wife,

Wednesday I had my first dinner company of the season, in a very modest way. Mr. Kingsbury, Frank Goodridge, Mrs. R. and Miss G. and I will now give you a sample





[1869]

brick of my daily life. Thursday as every day, I was forced up to my utmost brain and nervous capacity — at 8 P. M. I attended the trustees meeting at the Century — At 9 P. M. I attended Mr. Du Chaillou lecture and the meeting of the Council of The Geographical Soc. At 10 I attended the Reception of Artists at The Academy of Design, at 11 I was in bed, and between 3 and 4 A. M. asleep. Friday 8½ P. M. was at a Reception at Judge Daly's, Admiral and Mrs. Farragut, and divers celebrities there, at 10 P. M. went with C. P. Kirkland from there to a Reception and supper given to the Committee of the Bar, at Mr. Jas. W. Gerard's, At 12 M. in bed, but not asleep until after 3 A. M. when I got up and took a nervine. Saturday, 9 P. M. at the monthly meeting of the Century Club, at 10 P. M. met some gentlemen in conference about a case at Mr. Stoughton's library. At 12:30 in bed, after 1 A. M. asleep, and today I am taking my rest. This evening dissipation closes with the approach of Lent, and as I give no dinners or receptions in return, and do not go to one half I am asked to I am at a loss why people ask me.

Every time I go out I answer *about ten inquiries* about you, and this reminds me that I had Sunday P. M. an invitation to the Eaton's to tea, an impossible affair with me.

I shall be delighted when you close your term of absence and hope to survive to see you once more, but toil and dissipation are taking out what few gray hairs I have left. The weather has been fine and continues so —

The willows have turned yellow on the Park where I often drive, and an early Spring threatens us. I live in expectation of hearing from you on Friday

Yours most affectionately,

Wm. E. Curtis.





[1869]

WATERTOWN, Saturday, Feb. 20, 1869.

My dear Wife:

The family are all well. I left New York by the 8 a. m. train, drove up to Alla's, where the first face I saw was Master Willy. After arranging with Alla to go down with me Monday, I returned to the stage and resumed my journey to this calm retreat of snow-sprinkled mud. Sanford looks as fresh and brave as a stable boy, but has requested me "to give him 12 cents to buy some cough candy which Mr. Starr tells him will cure his cough right away." He says his cough has existed 3 or 4 days.

The baby (Mary) has improved and walks supported by a chair, and has four new teeth, which have arrived since I was last there. I doubt if she will have red hair. Randolph was celebrating his holiday with a game of marbles on the south side of the District School House, and on my asking who the colored boys with him were, he strenuously insisted they were white. Miss Calhoun is here visiting Miss Powell and seeks an opportunity to resume instructing. I came unexpectedly, but find a supply of fresh cod, pickerel, beef, and oysters in the house.

Sanford and I have just returned from a walk to Dayton's Pond, I find the finest ice I ever saw there, transparent blue cakes  $2\frac{1}{2}$  feet thick, and our ice-house has just been filled with it. I shall postpone writing much until tomorrow, for I am really tired with work and want of sleep, and expect to rise like a giant refreshed from slumber.

Sunday. 7:45 a. m. Feb. 21, /69.

I have made an elaborate toilette, and hearing no sounds in the house, but cheered and warmed by the bright sunshine pouring into the four windows of the room, I have taken my pen to inform you before breakfast that I had a glorious sleep, and am confirmed in the opinion that there is no bed like a feather bed, and that our ancestors were ahead of us in wisdom. Since I received your letters by the steamer from Nassau I have not seen Mrs. Cyrus Cur-





[1869]

tiss, but I will in time for your yarn by the steamer. Mr. Kingsbury came Monday night. Tuesday p. m. we called on Mrs. Bliss and saw such conjugal affection that took the wind out of our sails. We then called on your Uncle Thomas, and whilst we were there they both made up their minds and decided to go to Nassau by Thursday's steamer, and I think it is quite probable they have changed their views once or twice since on the subject, but it would not surprise me if they drifted there in company with this.

Friday at 6 ½ p. m. I went to Mr. Houghton's to a family dinner, and then worked on a case with him till 11 p. m. when Ole Bull who seems to always stay there, came in, and played an hour for us, Norwegian airs and songs, telling us the story of what he played. It was very delightful, and gave me new conceptions of his poetical and musical genius and of the capacity of the violin. His country seems to be rich in the wildest tales and traditions.

Thursday p. m. I went and took a Russian Bath by Dr. Thomas' advice, for my knee. It was rather pleasant to be heated into a profuse perspiration with hot steam, and then to be showered with hot water, shampooed, rubbed, beaten, pulled, twisted and then put on a lounge to recline in a composed state for half an hour. Unluckily, I can feel no benefit from it, and I took some cold in my face coming home that set my face aching for 48 hours. My lameness is about the same, and deprives me of all active exercise, but by the use of a stick I get about so as to attend to all ordinary matters.

Sanford seems to have improved very much, and has given up bellowing entirely since he went to school. The boys do well there and I regret Mr. Adams is about to leave, for they do much better when there are others to study with them, and I suppose there will be no school after he goes. I will keep the rest of this sheet for a P. S.

Yours affectionately,

Wm. E. Curtis.





[1869]

Tuesday, Feb. 23, 1869.

Arrived last night with Alla. Left them all well. Enclosed find Gold Certificate No. 658 as heretofore for \$250. Will mail a similar one tomorrow.

Yours affectionately,  
Wm. E. Curtis.

### *Journey to Europe*

Wednesday afternoon, June 23rd, I left New York on the Cuba for Liverpool. My notebook and letters to Mrs. Curtis from the date which I trust in some leisure hours I may write an account of a journey that I found very agreeable. I arrived at Liverpool on the evening of July 4th and the next day I went to London. I remained until July 13th visiting the Courts, Houses of Parliament, etc., then I went to Brussels where I passed a week with my old friend Sanford, making excursions from there, and having an agreeable interview with the King at Luchen.

I went to the Hague, thence to Amsterdam and on the 22nd arrived at Cologne. Thence to Weisbaden and Hombourg with the Sanfords. Parting with these good friends, I went on the 28th to Nuremburg, on the 29th to Munich and Augsburg to Lindau and Schaffhausen. On the 6th, passing through Zurich and Lucerne, I arrived at Giessbach on Lake Brientry, thence to Interlaken, Berne and Neufchatel. I arrived in Paris on the 10th of August and remained visiting and sightseeing until the 16th inst., when I went to the Chateau of Giverville, where I passed a week most charmingly. The 23rd I returned to Paris, where my cousin Mrs. McLean informed me of the death of her father, my old friend and my father's old friend, Charles Chapman. I heard but a week before of the death of Isaac Toucy, also the friend of my parents and my own. The 23rd visited Fontainbleau. 28th returned to London via Calais. 31st went to Ventnor, Isle of Wight, via Portsmouth and Ryde. September 1st went





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to Cowes and Southampton to Salisbury, visited Stonehenge. 2nd went to Liverpool via Bath, Bristol, Gloucester, Worcester and Birmingham. 4th left on the Java, and on the morning of Wednesday, September 15th, landed in New York.

LANGHAM HOTEL.

London,

July 7, 1869.

My Dear Wife:

I have just received your letter of the 25th. Yesterday I went to Mr. Morgan's to dinner at  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 7. Met Gen. Robert E. Schenck and Mr. Walker of Springfield there, Miss Morgan, Mrs. Morgan, Jr. and Miss M. The house is beautifully situated, and the rear opens upon a little park like Grammercy Park only larger. The dinner was in all respects admirable, and the fruits were strawberries, raspberries, two kinds of cherries, and pineapple, and grapes, quite equalling anything New York can do in the way of fruits. This morning I wrote for the address of your Uncle Nathan,\* Miss Shattuck and Mr. Herbert. I also left a card for Chief Justice Doyle at the Atheneum Club and ditto for the Bishop of Nassau at the offices of the Soc. for the Prop. of the Gospel, etc. Thence I went to the Courts at Westminster Hall, but soon went into the House of Commons where I spent five hours very much interested in a Debate on the Trades Unions. Mr. Hughes, author of *Tom Brown at Rugby* was speaking when I went in, and he spoke well and sensibly. Several prominent speakers followed. I saw John Bright who has grown old and stooping a very little in nine years. I was surrounded by the officers of the Reform League where I sat in the Gallery. Shoemakers, masons, joiners, etc., all of them representing the council of the great Trades unions, and a rough looking but good-natured set of fellows they were. When they

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\*Step uncle Judge Nathan Smith.





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found by questions I asked as to what was going on, that I was an American, they asked about wages we pay, prices of clothes, flour, etc., if I had seen Mr. Gough lately, whom they all knew, and then they showed me the photographs of their officers and council and brought to me the Sect. of the League, Geo. Howell. These are men who are accomplishing much for their class, and who have vast interests entrusted to them by hundreds of thousands of working men, yet they receive nothing, work hard a good share of the time, and though they were in conference with millionaires in the House of Commons some of whom came to them in the gallery, not one of them, though in clean, Sunday suits, wore clothes that an American mechanic would have condescended to look at.

I have also today received a letter from Sanford urging me to visit him, saying that if I will telegraph he will meet me at the depot and take me to his house. I am inclined to think I shall not go to Brussels for a few days and perhaps not until after he has left, as I am disposed to remain quiet here for the present. I will write you more tomorrow.

Friday, July 9th, /69.

Yesterday I attended on the argument of an appeal at the House of Lords, then upon an argument of a case before a committee of that House. Then went to Hyde Park to see the equestrians on Rotten Row. All the country gentry are in town, and have brought their saddle horses, and it was a sight to see at least 2,000 gentlemen, ladies and grooms following, all well mounted and some of them riding at full speed.

I then went to the National Academy, to take a look at the pictures I saw nine years ago with so much pleasure, Turner by the side of Claude Lorraine, and some of the master-pieces of Rubens.

In the evening I attended a session of the House of Lords. Lord Cairns, late Lord Chancellor, was one of the





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leading speakers. He has not grown old since nine years ago when he took me to look at the same scene, and standing up to watch it at the bar of the House. Since then from a spectator and a hard-working lawyer, he has become an actor, and comparatively a man of leisure. The present Chancellor, late Mr. Pagewood, and Lord Chelmsford took active parts in the debate.

Some of these hereditary legislators work hard. The committee I was before, have been from 11 to 5 when the House meets, taking testimony. None of our committees work harder. The Chairman, Earl Powis, is a man of 55. Lord Sidmouth, Abercrombie, and Waterford, who are with him are all young men. I must close. I hope you are all well. Write often if but a line.

Love to all,

Yours affectionately,

Wm. E. Curtis.

LANGHAM HOTEL,  
London,

Sunday, July 11, 1869

My Dear Wife:

I received a letter Thursday afternoon from Mme. de Giverville, saying she was to leave the next day for some tonic iron springs, Forge aux eaux, to be absent until Aug. 1, and urging me to come to Giverville then and stay "as long as I could or would," after having visited Holland and Belgium.

I have had a letter from the Bishop asking me to come to them at the place where they have gone about 40 miles from London, also the same from your Uncle Nathan who is at Bath and has taken his passage home on the steamer of Aug. 24th, also Mr. Greatorex has invited me to go to Harrow with him and make a visit at his brother's place there, who it seems is the eldest son, and holds the acres.





[1869]

Hence you see I am pretty well provided for board and lodging if I should accept all the proffered hospitality.

I was sorry to miss on Friday a call from Mr. Auberon Herbert, and another from Chief Justice Doyle who must be in clover here. That morning I called on Mr. Greatorex, and then went to the most curious place in London, and where from what I have looked into it (and I believe as an American they have less jealousy of me than of a countryman), there is an immense and unexplored mass of material for history,—The Herald's College. I was there nine years ago, and the official relics of a past civilization gave me their cards, and this time they made the hours I have passed there very pleasant.

You drive through an ancient gateway in the oldest part of London in a street where but one vehicle can pass which is not over 6 feet wide. You find a court of about 2 acres surrounded by old dilapidated looking buildings, the pavement of the Court and the flights of steps seem to be worn about out of time. The porter asks you what you want, and the antedeluvians inside were astounded that I knew they had James 1st turquoise mounted sword, and wanted to know how I knew it, and step by step I have got a look at their uncatalogued treasures of relics and manuscripts, most of which I fancy came to them in stormy times for safe-keeping, and their title is pretty good for there is not much chance of the owners coming for them.

After church I called on Mr. Herbert and Judge Doyle and Mr. Quintun, where I had declined an invitation to dinner and left a card at Mr. Morgan's. Judge Doyle and Mr. Herbert were out. I intend to go to Brussels Tuesday. I hope you are all well.

Yours affectionately,

Wm. E. Curtis.





[1869]

Brussels, July 19, 1869.

My Dear Wife:

I have just received your letter of July 1, No. 3 forwarded to me from London and am glad to hear you are all well. I am just on the point of leaving for the Hague, after having passed a week very agreeably here, and making this my point of departure for exploration of the surrounding country.

I have written you all the details of my trip up to Thursday last. That day I visited in the morning the Courts. I then drove with Sanford out to Luchen about 4 miles to the palace where it had been arranged I was to have an interview with the King. We were received with ceremony and ushered through a double line of servants in livery to a large room where the officer of the palace was in attendance. In a few minutes we were ushered into another large apartment, in the centre of which a handsome man of 35, dressed in the deepest mourning, and at least 6 feet four, was standing. We had a conversation of half an hour in English at first, and then in French. The King asked questions all the while, was well up in most things in regard to our country, wanted to know how we managed about women and children working in mines and manufactories. Spoke of his trouble about it, and said it made "mauvais menage" when the women worked in the mines during the day and the husbands were driven to pass the evenings at the cabaret. He said he had been in China and his father's illness called him home, or he should have gone to America then and that he meant to visit America in 3 or 4 years if he could by that time have his affairs in such a position he could do so, etc. I told him with pride about our laws and schools meeting the evils his people suffered by the employment of women and children. He said he had never ventured to attempt the innovation of compelling the peasants to send their children to school, but he had thought much about it and how it would benefit the country and that he wished to





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see how all these things worked in the United States. He is evidently a well-informed man and understands and devotes himself to his duties.\*

After that I visited a curious collection of paintings and the Zoological gardens, in which were interesting collections of fishes. In the evening the English minister, Sears, of the Legation, and Wife, dined at Sanford's.

Friday the 16th. I went with Mr. Sanford's mother and Miss Janet Shelton to visit Bruges and Ghent and we passed a very pleasant day. In fact it has not rained a day since I have been here.

But the time for me to go to the train and eat my breakfast has arrived, and I will tell you all about it in my next in a day or two. Mrs. Sanford sends her love to you and hoping you are all well I am,

Yours most affectionately,  
Wm. E. Curtis.

Homburgh Les Blains  
Monday, July 26/69.

Mrs. Curtis,  
c/o W. E. Curtis,  
Watertown, Conn.  
U. S. A.

My Dear Wife:

I arrived here Sat. p. m. and have concluded to take a rest for a couple of days and have just telegraphed to London to have the letters received for the past week while I have been wandering about forwarded to me here, and I expect to receive them Wednesday morning.

In the evening Sanford came with his wife, mother, cousin, child and for servants and the next day we went up the Rhine to Biberich by steamer. We arrived there about 10 p. m. and drove out in a carriage to Wiesbaden.

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\*He played Mr. Sanford a mean trick in the Congo speculation which ruined Mr. S.





These German baths are rather interesting places. All nations are represented, and just at present the Turks and the Americans are the greatest gamblers; our countrymen, Russians, Englishmen, Frenchmen, and Germans predominate in numbers, and the diversity of manners, language, toilette and features are quite interesting. Our new diplomatic representatives are all here, engaged in indefatigable devotion to the cause of the country they represent, and some of them have with them their wives and their children. I find here Mr. Washburn, minister to Paris, with his Secretary of Legation, Moore, of the Century, John Jay and his family from the Legation at Vienna. Gov. Curtin and his Secretary who belong at St. Petersburg, and about a dozen others. Baron Stoeckl whom you recollect last summer at the Pequot House, is also here. Belmont and many others. The gay shops and ladies of Paris are largely represented here and the entire company of the Palais Royal Theatre play every night, so I infer this place bears somewhat the relation to Paris that Saratoga does to New York. The gambling is pretty extensive, and almost as much indulged in by the women as the men. I think a large proportion of the people are adventurers, male and female that make up the gay, floating crowd, and then all the great unfortunates come here for comfort. Yesterday I saw the Duke of New Castle, who has left the turf ruined in fortunes, a youngster, you remember his father came over with the Prince of Wales. He had with him his mother who ran away with the groom whom she married, after the old Duke got a divorce, also the groom, now his step-father, and their child, his half-sister, about four years old, and his wife the present Duchess with black eyes and blackened eyelids, and a lady friend of these precious samples of the noblest aristocracy in the world. When the groom married the Duchess, he told the clergyman here who married them, that he was at a loss how he should ever get on trying to act the strange part of a gentleman. "Always wear a





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black coat and always keep your mouth shut," was the rejoinder of his spiritual adviser, and they say he has most faithfully adhered to it.

This morning I went to the springs but could not swallow any of the water. They lie in a beautiful wood approached by shady walks and are surrounded by flowers and on one side a fine conservatory. I saw American white daisies and mullens receiving the choicest attention of the gardeners. At one spring the water in a jet completely covers a large, beautiful boquet. But I must close. Mr. and Mrs. Sanford have desired me to send you their love, and I hope and pray you are all well.

Love to the boys, and oceans of it to you,

Yours most affectionately,

Wm. E. Curtis.

GRAND HOTEL.

Paris,

Aug. 24th, 1869.

My Dear Wife:

I have just received yours and Willy's letter of Aug. 6th, and also yours of Aug. 8th, and am sorry to hear that he is suffering from headache. I suppose Mr. Barton may as well take his vacation in August as he has no school, and it seems very questionable if our boys will in any event turn it to much account, as I fear they will have to vegetate for the present. Am sorry the cistern, under the influence of continual rain, has given out, but after using the well for a few days it must occur to the Celtic genius to clean the leaves, apples and sticks out of the pipes, so that the water can flow into it from the roof again when it rains and which has been done every summer.

I left Giverville yesterday afternoon driving with Mr. de G. to the station, and arrived here at 5 p. m. and in the evening called on Mrs. McLean and found them all very





much distressed by the receipt of the news of the death of Mr. Chapman, which was quite a surprise to me.

I shall probably leave here in a few days for England and the time for sailing begins to be near at hand.

On the Friday after I wrote you, I went with Mr. de G. to Serguigny, the Chateau of the Marquis de Croix, and breakfasted and passed most of the day there. It is a fine, old chateau, placed low in a long stretch of meadow, with a grand avenue of trees, and approached by driving over the bridge of a moat, kept filled with water surrounding it. He is a widower with two daughters, Mme. la Marquise de Caulaincourt, a widow, and Mme. la Comtesse de Dugdmar, both young and handsome; (and 60 horses). The latter I took in to breakfast and sat by the other, and passed a very agreeable morning. The breakfast had meats for Protestants, and fish, shrimps, eggs, fruits, pastry, wine, etc. for people of all faiths. About a dozen persons were present and it lasted an hour and a half. The old Marquis who is immensely rich and a Senator of France, took us all over his stables, keeping us some three hours looking at horses, colts, trotters, etc., and giving us specimens of the speed and action of his favorites. On our way home we called on a Mme. La Comtesse de Gauville, who has an interesting Chateau, and who received us very kindly. She is a widow and has been beautiful (and looks like Mr. J. M. L. Scovill.) She thinks very much of Mr. de G. as a Christian and the friend and admirer of her son Comte de Gauville, whom he has lately been second for, in a duel fought with swords at the Boise de Vincenne. The next day she came to Giverville and dined and I was very much interested in her style, which was a new female revelation. For her, Henry V is King, the Pope infallible, the Bourbons heavenly, modern progress and education the bane of all nations, etc.

Sunday I attended mass in the morning. The ladies in the family pew were the only ones who wore bonnets, every other woman in the church wore white caps. After church





[1869]

I was stared at as the general impression was that I must be black coming from America. From noon to vespers, shops were opened, market held, meats and grain sold in public, and after vespers as is the usual custom here, a violin was brought out and the men and women who had been 12 and 14 hours per day at the harvest danced three mortal hours on the ground in the open air. This I fancy was the origin of Church greens. But I must close with much love to you and the children and to Alla and all.

Yours affectionately,  
Wm. E. Curtis.

(Extracts from letter from Mme. de Giverville)

17th May, 1870.

. . . . . I wish Mr. Sanford could get (to) Paris — he would represent us creditably. (I should go to his balls). I am sure his salons would be très frequente — there is a very pleasant American society in Paris now. The Washburns have a nice house, Mrs. W. is my cousin but entre nous she has no “usage” whatever, is exceedingly plain and uninteresting. He is a politician, the superior to the generality of swaggering westerners. Mr. Sanford was cut out for the diplomatic service for he has brains as well as breeding and you have no idea what weight savoir vivre has even with the statesmen in France — politeness ranks next to godliness and cleanliness in this land of fine manners.

Giverville,  
—————’70

Dear friend:

I have been intending to write to you for an age but I am so *dull*, I feel as if I were living in a perpetual nightmare, all the horrid things that are going on. The Prussians are in Normandy and I dare say we shall have them here as this is a very rich and fertile country.





[1870]

All our neighbors are in active service. The Marquis de Croix being old and unwieldly has gone to Belgium with his daughter, the fair Marquise, till the war is over (?). The Senators lost their seats by the fall of the iniquitous Bonaparte. That hussy, Mathilde, was making away with diver's packages which were fortunately seized by the police and the French public is now regaling itself with the correspondence of "Invasion III." The light thrown upon the private life and habits of Cesare are not calculated to obtain for him the admiration or respect of the present or future. An effete brain prematurely worn out by excesses; a puppet made to move by the strings of favoritism, a despot with a thousand caprices, "Napoleon le Seducitaire." If he had only fallen into the abyss with his advisors and their rottenness, but he has dragged France with him into the depths of humiliation and ruin. A million of Germans in France, pouring over it with the most formidable artillery that the world has ever seen, nothing to resist them, thousands of raw recruits but no brain to organize, to lead, to impel and give life. France has sinned, but she is cruelly punished. M. Thiers is going to the King's headquarters at Versailles to hold a parley, and we shall know the result very soon, but the French would rather bury themselves under the ruins of their country than give up one iota of territory which would only be a preliminary step to further concessions and to the acknowledged sovereignty of Prussia.

I dare say I shall go to America in the Spring. Our affairs need attention. I shall settle for a year or two somewhere in the land of my forefathers, New England — nous verrons.

Write soon. Tell Fred that I received his letter and shall write him and Alla. If you see Mme. D'Armainville tell her the Prussians have not yet got into our neighbor-





[1870]

hood. I suppose Mrs. Curtis is South. Love to her if she is not and your children.

Very sincerely yours,  
V deG.

Giverville '71  
March 16th.

My dear friend:

I received your letter of the 24th Feb<sup>y</sup> a few days ago. The Prussians invaded Giverville the 23d of January and remained for fifteen days the Lords of all they surveyed as I left, and went to a chateau in the neighborhood till the armistice. The 5th division of cavalry under command of General de Barbey made a charge on the wine cellar and the result was a thousand bottles of wine were "among the missing." The soldiers stole all M. de Giverville's shirts, boots, coats, pantaloons, hunting dress and so forth. Hay, fodder of every kind, vanished in a twinkling as there were three hundred horses to feed. Your room was occupied by a drunken Surgeon who came near setting fire to the house. My apartment, fortunately, fell to the Commandant a young Mr. von Veltheim, who behaved like a gentleman and did what he could to preserve order but he was subordinate to the General and Colonel. The old cook remained in charge of the house and conducted herself most *gallantly* for the General *threatened to shoot her* if she did not give them champagne wine — finally he was made to understand that there was none and shooting a woman would not add greatly to his military fame. I am an American and therefore, cannot be suspected of prejudices — (for I despise the French people and Republicans) but this war was pillage and rapine organized on a vast scale, all the valuables stolen by officers high in command are incalculable. The colonel took my two double harnesses. I am now obliged to creep about with one beast. Apropos the coupe was requisitioned to take a wounded officer to Chartres, forty leagues from here the coachman escaped and brought





back the carriage which otherwise would have gone to Berlin. The Marquis de Croix sent all his horses to Belgium. The Marquis de Monsari's carriages were driven off and are on their way to Germany. King William is not responsible for the war, but on his head rests the iniquitous manner in which it is carried on — he has sown dragon's teeth and with the help of God the French in twenty years, or less, will take their revenge. The infants in swaddling clothes are to be trained in those ideas — I am hoping to have a son to teach him German and vengeance — apropos of counting chickens before they are hatched. Please find out Dr. Sims' address in N. Y., and whether he intends coming to Europe this summer. Dr. Thomas will know. M. de G. got perfectly well, do not speak of his illness to any one for it was hypochondria, and enlisted in M. de Charette's cavalry — it is a corps composed of the flower of royalists and if the Lord's annointed comes to the throne, stands some chance of being favored. M. de G. was mentioned in the order of the day for gallant and meritorious conduct and is proposed for the Cross of the Legion d'honneur much to my satisfaction if he gets it. I shall send you his photograph as soon as I get it from the photographer.

Anxiety and separation are not wholesome, I am as thin as a June shad and as grey as a badger. I think a drive in the park and a few discussions on conchology would materially benefit me. I hope we shall go to America before very long. My property is getting very valuable, but produces taxes principally. I shall have to get rid of some of it. I enclose an account of Mexican *tights* which will edify you and enlighten you on the *spiritual* condition of Juarez' "distinguished countrymen." Mrs. Curtis will soon be coming home again. My love for her and the children. I wrote Fred and Alla a while ago. Give them news of me with love. Miss Motley married a Mr. Sheridan the other day. There are quantities of Americans floating about in London Society.





[1870]

Where are the Sanfords? My sister is well and the mother of seven living children; I predict *twins* for you on my next visit to New York.

Believe me yours sincerely

M. K. G.

M. de G. is still away in Brittany, his corps has not yet been disbanded. Giverville is beginning to look green and the avenue is "picking up."

I hope the Alabama claims will be satisfactorily settled. Prussia has kept England idle by holding that threat over her head. Bismarck says that Bonaparte has not only *killed* his dynasty but buried his ——— For the sake of morality and justice; let us hope it, for in that family the women are sans peur and the men sans coeur.

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Wednesday, September 29th. Forty-six years old to-day.

Thursday, November 18th, Thanksgiving. Detained in New York by the illness of Holbrook, passed the day with him and his Mother. We were prevented from joining the other children, who were at Watertown.

Christmas.

Saturday. Beautiful day. Went to see the boys skate in the morning. Attended Church. Watertown furnishes more amusements for boys at this season than all the fine toys and gaiety of New York.

New Year's, 1870

Made calls with Mr. Kingsbury. About 1 P. M., it commenced raining and the day terminated in a dismal storm. Mrs. Curtis came in the evening from Watertown.

Monday, March 21st. Today I assisted as pall-bearer for my long esteemed friend Julian C. Verplanck. I shall no more meet, as I have done almost weekly for many years, this most agreeable friend, whose conversations, reminiscences, wonderful culture, and admirable life and princi-





[1871]

ples, charmed all who knew him. He died in his 84th year, without pain, and without mental decay. I cannot recall in all our long acquaintance, one word that indicated anything but what the most innocent child could have listened to, so guileless he seemed to be. The other pallbearers were Wm. C. Bryant, Jas. R. Roosevelt, Fred De-Peyster, Henry Nicoll, Wm. Kemble, Jas. Thompson and Thomas Ludlow.

Thursday, September 29th, 1870. I am alone at my house in town attending the Courts. The summer has passed pleasantly, though it has been one of unusual heat and drought. I have remained with my family at Watertown, such portion of it as I could be absent from the City. Death has during the interval removed the widow of my Uncle Robert, a most amiable and excellent lady. Yesterday brought me the intelligence of the death of Benjamin Rankin at Schaffhausen in Switzerland, for many years my much loved pupil, assistant and friend. My family have enjoyed health during the summer, and I am quite well, but I feel an unusual shrinking, as I see the amount of professional labor I have enlisted for the coming months.

Thursday, November 24th, Thanksgiving. Drove with Mrs. Curtis to Jerome Park in the morning. Dined at home with the children that were in town.

New York, Sunday, Feb. 5/71

Mrs. W. E. Curtis,  
Royal Victoria Hotel,  
Nassau, New Providence, Bahamas.

My Dear Wife,

I received your two letters by the steamer yesterday and was glad to hear you were all well and comfortable. Monday went to Waterbury — then Watertown, found all well — saw baby in the morning.

I have dined at home every day since my return and worked very hard, and shall dine at home today. Thurs-





[1871]

day evening by a superhuman effort I turned away from my inviting couch and dressed, and went to the Charity Ball for about an hour and a half, and a handsome spectacle it was. Tuesday I have accepted a request to take part in a dinner, to be given to Mr. Gouverneur Kemble 85 aet. at the Century. Lads like Wm. C. Bryant and myself will show honor and reverence for our seniors.

P. S. Dr. Vinton has written me a very pleasant letter and enclosed Holbrook's drawing of an "actual scene in Nassau," and I should have called again to see him, if he had not said in his note we should probably meet at the Century Saturday evening. But he was not there last night, though I saw him passing into Trinity yesterday as I was driving by.

I trust when you get back you will condescend to at least dine with untitled Yanks, though I will try to get some militia rank, if that will enable me to pass muster. The baby looked nice and fresh when Ann brought her out. Remember me to Miss Shattuck.

Ever Affectionately yours,  
Wm. E. Curtis.

No. Broadway, New York,  
Wednesday, Feb. 8/71.

My Dear Wife,

I have heard from Watertown and as Willy writes he has indited 5 pages to you I fancy you will get full 6 cents worth from there. . . .

I saw your Uncle Henry in Court yesterday who invited me to dine with him on Saturday which I accepted. Today I dine at Mrs. Stoughton's. Last night we gave a little dinner, some twenty of us, at the Century in honor of Mr. Gouverneur Kemble who has just passed his 85th birthday. It was a very pleasant affair. Wm. C. Bryant aet 75 presided and made the opening speech. Mr. Kemble aet 85 made a long speech in reply. His brother William





[1871]

told me he never heard him speak before and that it was his maiden effort. Mr. A. B. Durand, about 76, spoke, then boys like S. J. Tilden, John Gourley, Pres. Barnard, etc. West Point was represented by Dr. Metcalfe, Gen'ls. Cullom, Baldy Smith, Barnard, Webb, etc., mostly Century men. Mr. Pierson at 80 presided at one end of the table and spoke. These old associates of Washington Irving and that class are moving rapidly off the stage, and I rather regret that I have never accepted any of the hospitable invitations I have received in past years to country places on the river, where I should have seen more of them.

But I must close. Shall probably have the weakness to write you again just before the steamer mail closes.

Gen. Webb told me last night that his father, Gen. Jas. Watson Webb, goes in the Steamer tomorrow to Nassau & have 4 rooms engaged months since —

Love to Holbrook.

Yours affectionately,

Wm. E. Curtis.

### Journal.

Thursday, Mrs. Curtis and Holbrook sailed in the Moro Castle for Nassau, where I trust tomorrow's sun will find them safe and well. I am alone in the City, all the children being in Connecticut. Intend dining at Mr. Stoughton's tonight. Tomorrow is to be devoted to paying visits, and is the Legal Holiday. The New Year comes in smiling with sunshine, and I trust will smile on me and mine, during the continuance as the old year has done, for which I thank Providence.

Friday, September 29th, 1871. Forty-eight today. Alone in the City attending to professional duties. The family are at Watertown, where we have all passed a pleasant summer, all well. Only left once with Mrs. Curtis and that was to attend Miss Shattuck's wedding in Boston. Putting on my glasses for the first time to write in this book helps me to realize the flight of time. William is a freshman at Trinity.





[1871 and 1872]

Sunday, November 12th, 1871. On Sunday, October 1st, I attended Dr. Booth's funeral at Newtown and returned in the evening. The next evening I left for Rochester where I actively participated in the proceedings inaugurated by the Democratic Reform party. The campaign has since then occupied much of my time, and on Sunday the 7th instant, I was elected a Judge of the Superior Court by nominations from all parties, opposed to Tamany. If I live, and am content to sit on the bench the next fourteen years, my professional life I feel will soon close. But I cannot read the future. I have been ill for the past three days with a severe cold, which prevents my attending my Aunt Ann Edmond's funeral at Newtown today. She was a retiring diffident person, but most amiable, kind and unselfish. Her life was passed in devoted attention to others. The first portion of her life was spent in making the descending path smooth and pleasant to her aged parents, and the rest to her sister Mrs. Booth and her children. And now when infirmity and long suffering came upon her, those children have most affectionately cared for her. I am glad I saw her when I was at Dr. Booth's funeral and took leave of her, which somewhat consoles me for not being able to pay the last tribute of respect to a relative for whom I always felt a warm attachment, and who is pleasantly associated with most of my early recollections.

New Year's, January 2, 1872. Monday. A mild overcast day. I have driven with Willy making calls a good part of the day. I see in him so much of myself at that age. With a hard cold and sore throat, I fancy a sense of duty rather than of pleasure, has induced me to pay visits today.

Sunday, June 30th, 1872. Mrs. Curtis and Holbrook and Randolph went in February to Nassau and returned the 20th of April, well and having enjoyed the excursion. Yesterday the Gen. Term adjourned and I am free until September 20th unless called on to supply some unforeseen





vacancy at Special 7 and Chambers. I have some cases yet to examine and decide, but the mercury has kept in the 90's for some days. I have determined to take a vacation and go to Watertown on Tuesday where all the family are. The first six months of my judicial life have passed away very agreeably. I trust that I shall not regret the change.

Sunday, September 29th, 1872. Forty-nine years this Michaelmas. I am alone in town sitting at Chambers, and have been since the 11th instant. I have supplied a part of the vacancy caused by the death of Judge McCann. I have passed most of the summer with the family at Watertown. In July I visited Saratoga, and in the latter part of August I went with Willy to Newport and Narragansett Pier for a few days. On Thursday Aug. 1st at 2 P. M. my dear Aunt Mrs. Tomlinson died at Hartford, and I attended her funeral on the 5th of August. She was an energetic, sensible, judicious woman, strongly attracted to her friends and relatives and always most kind and affectionate to me. She nursed me when I was a law student and ill with scarlet fever in New York with a mother's tenderness, and by her advice and encouragement did much to benefit and encourage me in my early life. She lived into her 90th year, retaining her faculties, except her eyesight failed to a considerable extent the last year or two. Her general health seemed good, but yielded to the unprecedentedly long and severe heat of July and terminated in an illness which was brief and diptheretic in its character. Her death, and the removal of Mrs. Chapman from Hartford, will break up a house where, from childhood, I have ever been most kindly and hospitably entertained.

(Judge Holbrook Curtis was born in 1787. Polly Ann 1782 — She was married at the age of 15 to Isac Tomlinson.)

My oldest son has entered his sophomore year at Trinity College and my second, Holbrook, has entered the Episcopal Academy at Cheshire.





[1873]

Sunday, January 12th, 1873. Life passes quietly. Many friends leave the world whom I have been in the habit of frequently meeting. From the Century, Dr. Lieber, Kensett, Ino H. Priestly, and others I might enumerate who have recently died. My new duties are agreeable and I like the change. Thanksgiving and Christmas were passed in New York with my family. New Year's I went to Washington to break up a lingering cold by a change of air and scene, and I succeeded.

Tuesday, February 18th, 1873. Having a brief vacation, and my oldest son and myself being advised to try a little change of air, we started at 1 P. M. for Florida by rail. Found on the train the Italian Minister whom I had met at Newport, a very agreeable and cultivated man. He gave me some interesting accounts of his diplomatic experience at Madrid in the time of the late Queen. Reached the Arlington House at Washington at 11 P. M. Wednesday, February 19th. Took the first boat down the river since the ice broke up, moving in the freshet amid acres of driftwood. At 3 P. M. reached Richmond via Quantico.

The rest is omitted — descriptions of scenery.

New York Superior Court,  
Judges' Chambers, New Court House,  
New York, May 27, 1873.

My Dear Wife:

After dinner yesterday I called at your Uncle Thomas' and found your Aunt apparently far from well. Your Uncle Thomas appeared in good condition, though I see some of his lawsuits are decided adversely. Slept with windows open last night, it was so warm, but in spite of that I caught cold in my head. They always strike the weakest part.

Willy came to the house just as I was leaving, very much refreshed, he said, with his visit to the Delafields.

It is cooler today. I have accepted an invitation for Wednesday again to meet William Richards, Chief Justice





of Canada, but I distrust my capacity to stand dining out in this way. This is at Mr. Albert Matthews' house.

I hope you are all well.

Yours affectionately,

Wm. E. Curtis.

P. S. Am writing in Court. Samuel McLean arrived yesterday from Liverpool. Many people have already gone out of town. Half the houses about are empty, and apparently all will soon be so. I am too modest to carry round the plate, that is too lame, at St. George's, so don't be too much set, you and Alla, at having another indifferent vestryman in the family.

Yours affectionately,

Wm. E. Curtis.

#### Trip with his son William

Tuesday Aug. 26. We went by rail to Halifax, N. S. Saw hundreds of trees prostrated on the sides of the mountains by the storms of the two previous days. Wednesday we visited the Citadel, Public Buildings, the Point and Forts.

Friday Aug. 29th. We visited Trin. Church. Saw the tablets, among others to Wm. Scoville, the Canon's Father. Went with him to the old burial place of many of the eminent Loyalists and in the evening attended a play by the officers of the Halifax garrison, and very well done for amateurs. The next day I drove with Dr. Keator to many places of interest, and in the evening attended a Scovill family supper and dancing at the former's residence. Sunday, Aug. 31, drove to Rothesay and dined with Mr. Domvill, M. P., at his residence, Kinghurst, and attended Church there. Mrs. Domvill was a Miss Scovill. In the evening we called at Canon Scovill's, Dr. Keator's, Mr. Thorne's and Mr. Jas. Scovill's and the next morning left for Bangor. Here we passed the night. Thence to Boston where I found Randolph and took him to St. Paul's School,





[1873]

Concord, whence I returned to Watertown the evening of Thursday Sept. 4th.

Sunday, Sept. 28. I am in town sitting at Chambers after a long summer's vacation. After attending Commencement at Trinity College and also the College Regatta at Springfield, I remained quietly at Watertown until Aug. 18, when I went to Boston. Thence I went to St. John, N. B. via Bangor, arriving Wed. p. m., Aug. 20, passing most of the way after leaving Bangor through a forest of evergreens. Thursday I went with the Rev. Canon Wm. Scovill and my son on the steamer which conveyed the Vice Regal party to the Regatta and thence on an excursion into the Bay of Funday. The next day we went to Fredericton, visited Govt. House and Gov. Wilmot, the University, Cathedral, Gibsons Village and Church and took tea with the Simons family. Saturday we returned by boat to St. John, a most charming trip. Sunday Aug. 24th, a memorable storm raged with great destruction upon the coasts. Attended Church and dined with Canon Scovill and went with him to service, driving across the suspension bridge shaking and swaying in the gale. Monday we went to Kingston, still delayed by it in crossing the ferry to the village. Saw the old Church where three generations of Scovills have officiated. Dined with Rev. Wm. Elias Scovill. Saw the graves of the old Loyalists in the Church yard to whom the Rev. Jas. Scovill preached after he left the Church at Waterbury.

Monday, Sept. 29, 1873. Fifty years of life have sped. Henceforth, the journey is on the declining path. Serenly, complacently, patiently and endeavoring to do my duty, may I await and meet the inevitable result.

Friday Dec. 19th. The Courts are about closing for the Christmas vacation. Thanksgiving, Nov. 27th, was passed at home. On Sunday Dec. 7th, Wm. Edmond Armitage, Bishop of Wisconsin, died, aged 43 years. He was an amiable, scholarly, sensible, able prelate and will be missed





[1873 and 1874]

in the Church. His grandmother, Mrs. Col. Starr of Danbury, Conn., was the half-sister of my Mother, hence his name of Wm. Edmond.\* In early life he was much at Watertown and until later years I have seen him often and was much attached to him and was looking forward to some period when I would be able to renew our old associations, but it is now too late.

Yesterday was the funeral of Judge Samuel Nelson for whom I entertained no ordinary feelings of attachment and reverence, but he was over 80 years of age and had retired some months from active life. His work here was completed when the summons came for him. He was on the Bench of the Supreme Court of this State when I was admitted to practice in May, 1846.

209 E. 15th St.,  
June 5/74.

My Dear Wife,

Your letter of June 3, mailed June 4th, arrived last evening. I dined with Dr. Roemer† at the Windsor and when I left the 5th Ave. was so blockaded with carriages at Miss Sterling's wedding in the Church that we were delayed. Your cards came too late to send. I sent mine and altered one to Mrs.

Judge Foot has just called, and dines with me at half past six and goes with me this evening to Mr. Van Winkles reception given Mr. Jno. Jay.

I hope you all keep well.

Yours affectionately,  
Wm. E. Curtis.

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\*She was the Polly of great-grandfather Edward's letters.

†A great friend of my fathers. A very learned man whose parentage nobody but my father ever knew but he was related to one of the royal families in Europe.





[1874]

Monday,  
14 W. 20th St.

My Dear Wife,

I suppose I shall get your Sunday letter tomorrow, and I feel quite anxious to know how you all are.

Yesterday I took a walk in the middle of the day up the Avenue with Gen. Cullam, but it was hot and rainy at the same time. In the afternoon I drove alone to the Park, and on my return, found Mr. Stoughton had been there and left a card asking me to dine with him at 6½ and saying 7 would do. When I reached the house I found an English official and his wife going in, and I was told by the servant the dinner would be at 7, so I returned to the house and donned my white choker and dress coat. The guests were all English except Gen. McDowell and myself. There were two of Sir Ed. Thornton's Secretaries of Legation from Washington, and Captain Gore Jones and his wife, the former a cousin of Lord Dufferin and whose mission here is to inspect every thing in relation to military and naval affairs. He has been engaged already two years, part of the time in California, his wife accompanying him. I have been in Court all day. The weather has become cooler and I think we shall have a pleasant change for the week.

Yours affectionately,

Wm. E. Curtis.

Sunday, June 14, 1874. Christmas and New Years passed as heretofore. My time has been constantly occupied in the discharge of judicial duties during the years until now, when I look forward to rest and vacation in Washington for three days with Willy, but passed a share of the time in writing and examining in the Law Library at the Capitol.

Thursday, Sept. 17th. On the 23rd of June, last, I purchased house No. 14 West 20th St. During the summer some repairs have been made and I now hope to soon re-





[1874]

move there. I am attached to my old residence, but the progress of the Teutonic and Celtic colonies northwards compels me to leave. I am the first of my family that has moved away from the house he commenced his married life in, as far as I know, but I keep the old house at Watertown.

The summer has been a cool and delightful one. We have passed it at Watertown very pleasantly. Willy has now gone to Trinity, Senior year. Holbrook has just entered Yale, the scientific course and Randolph and Kingsbury have gone to St. Paul's school, Concord. I have been here the past two weeks at Chambers. It has been very hot every day and is my first realization of actual summer. It has been a prolonged spring at Watertown.

Tuesday, Sept. 29th, 1874. Fifty-one years of age to-day. A stormy, dark day. Yesterday evening I came to town with Mrs Curtis to make some arrangements about moving into our new house. I feel reluctance as the day approaches, at the idea of quitting the abode where I have passed the best years of my life. I trust that a kind Providence will continue wherever I am, to bless me with his bounties and to make me worthy to receive them.

Thursday Oct. 15, 1874. Slept for the first time at my new domicile, 14 West 20th, very soundly with the turmoil and trouble of moving. Sorry to leave the house where the best years of life have been passed.\*

Thursday Nov. 26th. Thanksgiving Day. Willy and Holbrook home from College for the occasion which passed very pleasantly.

Christmas. Willy, Holbrook, and Randolph and Kingsbury from St. Paul's School, all home for Xmas. A noisy happy crowd of hungry lads.

Here is a letter from my mother. 1874 or 1875

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\*There was a German band in the boarding house next door in 15th Street that was the last straw which drove them out. In some respects they were never as comfortable in the 20th Street house.





[1874]

To Randolph and Kingsbury.  
St. Paul's School, Concord, N. H.  
14 West 20th St.,  
Sunday.

My darling boys,

Does it not seem good to be able to say next week we are coming home. We have not had any cold weather here to last more than a few hours, so it is hard to realize you have ice and snow in Concord.

Sanford went to the Mayor's funeral, so he will be able to tell you all about it when you come home. I doubt if he has time to write.

Mary Kingsbury went home yesterday afternoon. Papa was expecting to go to Hartford yesterday morning to a Trustees' meeting, but he was taken sick Friday night and was confined to his room all day. He is better but has not been out today. He has to begin court again tomorrow and has no more vacation until Christmas. I have not heard a word from Holbrook since he went back after Thanksgiving.

It will be dark when you arrive Friday night, so perhaps San\* will not be able to meet you at the train, but you can come down in a Madison Ave. stage. That is the best and brings you the nearest.

A good hug for both of you. Remember me to Mr. Knox. Find out if he expects to be in New York during vacation.

Your loving mammy,  
M. A. Curtis.

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\*Sanford.





[1874]

Sunday, Apr. 30.  
NEW YORK.

F. Randolph Curtis,  
St. Paul's School  
(from Sanford Curtis)

Dear Old Ran;

I hope you and King are well, and that you will forgive me for not having written before, but I came to New York about 2 weeks ago.

(His Diary to show Ran what he was doing in New York.)

Wednesday.

Left a dirty hole commonly called "Pine Meadow"; arrived safely  $\frac{1}{2}$  past one and found Mama would arrive at 4 P. M. so I ate my lunch and went to see Aunty Alla and the girls who were in town at the Everett House — went and bought some flowers for Mama, some violets, Heliotrope, and so forth and put in her vases in her room, then sat down to wait her arrival. In a little while a carriage drove up and Lena and May — Mama — came out. " ! ! ! ! ! " She did not know I was coming until the next day.

Sunday.

Went to the Holy Com. in the morning and in the P. M. Jack and I went to the 27th Anniversary of St. Georges Sunday School.

Monday.

Missed you very much (*Superlative*). Went to a collection of old china. (Bought several nice pieces for — Aunt Maria (\$5.75) Aunty K. (\$3.50) and one very handsome little custard cup for Mama to be given to her on her birthday May 30th, from (you) and I. It cost \$1.75. If wish to give  $\frac{1}{2}$  please send me your I. O. U. for  $\frac{1}{2}$  immediately.





[1875]

Saturday.

Went to the Central Park with Mary, Bee and Mama. Towards eve., called on Misses Van——. In the evening, called on Maria Bates and found four or five boys there too, and about four or five girls. The first I knew the gas was turned out and the boys were all *kissing* the girls "of course" I was too Bashful to do it and it lasted for 15 minutes and then commenced again for 15 more for 2 hours, spent a very pleasant evening. Came home at 9:30 o'clock. This morning I went to the Holy Com. and this Eve I dine at Mr. Caswells. Going to a dance on Friday at Maria Bates. Give my best love to King and yourself. Remember me to all the boys and teachers.

With much love,

E. Sanford Curtis

Journal W. E. C.

Sunday, October 10, 1875. Was present at Willy's graduation at Trinity, July 1. Passed the summer quietly at Watertown until Sept. 7th, when I held Court in New York until Sept. 18th. Weather very hot. Sept. 20th, left Watertown and went to the White Mountains with Willy.

Friday, Oct. 29th. Mrs. Charlotte McLean died, a much beloved kinswoman. A year and a half younger than myself. We were thrown together from early childhood until her last illness. She was a most exemplary, kind woman, and of sparkling wit and amiable disposition.

Wednesday, Oct. 17th. Miss Harriet E. Powell died at Mrs. Kingsbury's, while visiting there. She was an inmate of Mr. Scovill's family and the instructress of Mrs. Kingsbury and Mrs. Curtis in their childhood and has taught my children and been an inmate of my family much of the time the past 13 years. She was discreet, sensible, well informed and passed a useful life in the shadow of great grief.





[1875 and 1876]

Monday, Nov. 22. The Courts adjourned this morning upon receipt of the intelligence of the death of Vice-President Wilson. During his last sojourn in New York, a little over three weeks since, we dined with Mr. Harris at the Union Club. He was in good spirits and cheered with the return of health, but I saw at times the weary blank look on his face for an instant that told the story that disease was upon him. The next morning, though he had gone from the table to speak at a public meeting, he was in fine spirits and seemed glowing with his former health and vigor.

To my surprise he told me that evening, that \$8,000 was the most he was ever worth, and that he should esteem himself fortunate if he could realize \$6,000 at the present time by selling all he had, and this he said "is all I have to show after twenty-one years of public service," and it is more than he needs and take with him. But he possessed the respect and affection of thousands who appreciated his kind, warm, honest heart and generous nature.

Thursday, Nov. 25. Thanksgiving. All the children at home, all well, and the day passed pleasantly.

#### Christmas.

All well, and twelve of the Curtis name sat down to dinner. This includes Mr. Cyrus Curtiss\* and his wife and son, and daughter-in-law. A pleasant reunion.

#### New Year's, 1876.

The Commencement of the Centennial Year. A charming, sunny, beautiful day, too warm for an overcoat. Called on many friends with my son, W.

Sunday, Feb. 20, 1876. Thus far a mild winter, no skating as yet in the Park and but two days sleighing. Mrs. Curtis, and Willy left Tuesday, Jan. 25, for St. Augustine. They are situated very pleasantly there, and Willy, their escort arrived on the steamer from Charleston a week ago Saturday morning after a smooth passage.

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\*No relation but great friends.





[1876]

Friday, March 17, 1876. Died in Brooklyn at the house of Sam. McLean, Mrs. Sarah Chapman, widow of the late Hon. Charles Chapman, aged 75 years. She was my only remaining first cousin on my father's side and the mother of Mrs. McLean, whose death I recorded a few weeks since. My relatives are fast leaving and old age and death daily creep nearer. In Mrs. Chapman I lose a life-long friend and a much attached kinswoman. From my earliest recollections she is associated with my past life at Watertown, and then at College, in Brooklyn and in New York, and also with much of my son's college life. She had her faults which all sprung from her ardent partizanship and attachment to the friends or to the political cause with which she was allied. She died painlessly and hopefully.

Sunday, March 28. Mrs. Curtis and children returned from Florida and South Carolina the latter part of April with Holbrook who went to Aiken to escort them back. All the family went last week to Watertown and are now there.

14 W. 20th St., New York,  
2 P. M., Thursday, April 3/76.

My Dear Wife,

Excerpts

I am at the Library at work, as I shall be for some days. Taking a walk this morning, I saw a great crowd of the roughest class of people gazing at A. T. Stewart's house and waiting to see the funeral. Suppose they find it hard to believe that a man who can conquer millions cannot escape death.

Mr. Sherman is making his garden next door, and you will find things on your return very different from last January. Send me a sweet jessamine flower in your next letter. I hope you are all well. Love to all.

Yours affectionately,

Wm. E. Curtis.





[1876]

Friday, June 2. Willy became of age to-day. There was a little gathering at Mrs. Kingsbury's home in honor of the event. I went to Connecticut to be present, and attended with Mrs. Curtis and Mrs. Randolph. The latter welcomed, also, his advent 21 years ago.

Tuesday, July 4, 1876. At 12 last night, I heard the salutation given the new century of the Republic, bells, cannon, steam whistles, music, fireworks, shouts and singing broke out in one grand chorus of welcome. I stood at the time on the roof of the high building at the N. E. Co. of 4th Ave. & E. 15th St. The general illuminations of the buildings were fine, but that of the buildings immediately surrounding Union Square was magnificent. The vast procession bearing torches and the faces of acres of human beings lighted up by every form of fire works added imposing features to the scene.

A hundred years ago, my grandfather, Wm. Edmond, of whom I saw a good deal in my boyhood was in Yale College, destined to be crippled for life in the conflicts of the then impending struggle. My father's father had a Lieutenant's Commission sent to him in one of the Loyalist Regiments in New York, and was hunted for months in the forests like a wild beast. The Episcopalians were mostly attached to the Crown in Connecticut. My wife's ancestor, an Epis. Clergyman, "The Rev. James Scovill," was badly persecuted and ultimately with several sons joined the American Loyalists at St. John, N. B. and passed the remainder of his life in that province. A hundred years have hardly sufficed to erase from the older portions of the country, the memory of wrongs inflicted, and acts of cruelty and injustice committed during the, to some extent, civil war of the Revolution. Who will live to see the veil of forgiveness and oblivion covering the bitter remembrances of the late Civil War?

Friday, Sept. 22, 1876. The summer vacation has passed away tranquilly. I held Court a few days in July and in





[1876]

Sept., and the death of Chief Justice Monell called me to town the 1st of Aug. My reading has been Caesar's Commentaries, Life of Macaulay and of Geo. Ticknor and I have prepared and delivered two addresses, one at the Bar meeting called on Chief Justice Monell's death, Aug. 8th, and the other at the reunion of the Survivors of the 2nd. Conn. Heavy Artillery at Watertown, Sept. 13. Tuesday, last, I visited the Centennial Exhibition at Philadelphia and passed several hours much interested and gratified. In the evening I returned to New York, and Wednesday I attended Prof. Charles Davies' funeral at Fishkill Landing. I received instruction from him when I was a student at Trinity College. My acquaintance with him and his family was renewed when I commenced practice and from the time of my marriage to his niece, at which he was present twenty-five years ago the second day of this month, he has been ever, one of my firm and abiding friends. He was by nature, kind, affectionate, enthusiastic and devoted to his friends. As an instructor at West Point and elsewhere, and as a soldier and a mathematician his record is distinguished. So pass away the friends of my youth! Perhaps his advent into the next world will bring him a welcome there from Gen. Scott and hosts of his departed old friends who have preceded him in the inevitable journey.

Friday, Sept. 29, 1876. Fifty-three today. A beautiful morning. Drove with Mrs. Curtis from Watertown to Naugatuck. Bought a pair of horses. Lunched at Mr. Kingsbury's. Leave tomorrow for New York to commence my year's work. Have passed a pleasant summer. Family have been well, but the poor Bishop of Nassau was with us very sick for six weeks and I fear he will never regain his health. My journal of more than 30 years is almost finished, perhaps I am. May I be ready for whatever comes.

Wednesday, Oct. 4, 1876. Was elected by my associates, Chief Justice.





*Henry Holbrook Curtis*

*Francis Randolph Curtis*

*William Edmond Curtis*

*Frederick Kingsbury Curtis*

*Eustace Sanford Curtis*











[1876 and 1877]

Thursday, Nov. 30th. Thanksgiving Day. Passed very quietly at home.

Christmas. A wintry day. At church in the morning. All the family at the dinner table. May we so meet the coming year.

New Years, 1877. Made calls with my son, William, driving very comfortably, but as night approached a severe and heavy snow storm interfered with the pedestrian callers.

Wed. Jan. 31, 1877. Reached Washington at 11 p. m. the next day was at the Capitol when the counting of votes for President commenced, but could not enter the hall as we had no tickets. Dined with Henry S. Sanford and went in the evening to Mr. Secretary Cadwallader's reception.

Friday morning we passed in the Treasury Building. In the afternoon we returned to New York. Willy accompanied me and enjoyed the dissipation and sight seeing. Mercury about 60 all the time we were in Washington.

Saturday, April 20, 1877. On Sat. Feb. 24, Mrs. Curtis and Mary left for Nassau via Savannah. They returned to Savannah some days since and are now en route north tarrying at Charleston and intend to reach New York early next week if the weather is pleasant.

In the afternoon we were at Pres. Grant's reception.

Sunday, June 10th. On the 1st of this month, my son Wm. E. Curtis was sworn in and commenced practice as an attorney, being associated in partnership with Mr. Stearns, who succeeded to my professional business. We are all well. Mrs. Curtis and the little girls at Watertown, and the boys at school and college, preparing for their summer vacations and examinations. I shall hold jury trials and remain here during this month.

Saturday, Sept. 29, 1877. Fifty-four today. Came from Watertown to the City to resume my duties on Monday. The summer has sped pleasantly, all the family have continued in fair health. Mrs. Curtis will join me in a few days.

Thursday, Nov. 29th. Thanksgiving. Passed at home





[1878]

Judges Chambers, New Court House.

NEW YORK, Mch 16th, 1878.

My Dear Wife —

I have not heard from Sanford the last few days — Randolph goes tomorrow to visit him —

I was at the breakfast this morning, given to Bayard Taylor, by a score or so of us at the Century Club. It was a very pleasant affair.

Tonight I have promised to dine at Dr. Thomas' and go with them to see Solon Shingle, or some Solon. Thursday evening I called at "No. 6" and had a very pleasant visit. Last night I left a card at the Delafield's who were out, and called at Dr. Thomas' and after that went to Mr. Hamersley's until 12, and today I have resumed or renewed the task of dissipation, to my sorrow.

Love to all.

Yours Affectionately,

Wm. E. Curtis.

Judges Chambers, New Court House,

NEW YORK, Mch 19th, 1878.

My Dear Wife,

Mr. Kingsbury is with me and in pursuance with your letter I expect Willy tonight. I have just called on Mr. Clift who has been confined to the house by illness the past two weeks, rheumatism.

Mr. Cyrus Curtis seems to be getting much better.

Mr. Kingsbury left them all well at Waterbury. He says Sanford was down on Saturday so I suppose he is getting on well.

I have accepted three dinner invitations since yesterday A. M., viz. Mr. & Mrs. Burnham for the 20th, Mr. E. Parsons for the 22d, Judge Van Horn for the 28th. So you see I am gradually returning to habits of dissipation.





[1878]

The day is lovely, and as yet we have no March weather. I intend to have the wooden steps removed, and I do not recall one day when they have been necessary this winter for our comfort or safety.

Yours affectionately,

Wm. E. Curtis.

Christmas. A fine day. At Church in the morning. All the children and Mr. and Mrs. Kingsbury and their children dined with us in the evening, and Mrs. M. Helena Curtis also. May we all meet next year.

New Year's, 1878. A clear cold day. The past month has been fine weather and no snow and but a day's rain. Saw dandelions on the Central Park three days after Christmas. Passed the day driving with Willy and making calls on numerous friends. Have had no fire in the furnace, weather being so mild.

Judges Chambers, New Court House,

NEW YORK, Mch. 24th, 1878.

My Dear Wife,

We have a warm moist day which is agreeable after the long term of dry weather. We have never had such a delightful March in my recollection. You will see by the papers the death of Mrs. Edmond Randolph Robinson. Mr Godkin told me she died in confinement after two days illness.

I dined Friday night at Mr. Parsons'. The guests were as follows:

Mrs. Parsons, Peter Cooper, Geo. Morgan, W. E. Dodge, Jr., W. E. Curtis, Major Millam, R. A., Late Secy. McCullough, Judge Noah Davis, Mr. Mann, Judge Ingalls, Rev. Dr. Adams, Mr. Parsons.

Dr. Adams told many amusing anecdotes and it was a very pleasant dinner.





[1878]

Last night I called on your Aunt Sarah and told them some of Dr. Adams' stories, which seemed to amuse the Misses Stuarts, who found in them a good Presbyterian flavor. I then looked into the Century for half an hour and returned home to bed.

Willy went to Sunday School this morning and is now at Church. I shall be glad to receive Mary's letter love to her —

Yours affectionately,  
Wm. E. Curtis.

Judges Chambers, New Court House.

NEW YORK, Mch. 28th, 1878.

My Dear Wife,

We have a mild warm rain this afternoon. . . . .

We spent last evening at the Coleman's very agreeably.

Judge Sanford lunched with me today and I said I would dine with him on Saturday. Mrs. Robinson's child he said was now very ill.

I saw Mr. Delafield last night as I looked into the Union Club on my way home. He said he was very sorry Mrs. D. did not go with you, and that she was now in Philadelphia . . . . .

Yours affectionately,  
Wm. E. Curtis.

Judges Chambers, New Court House.

NEW YORK, Mch. 29, 1878.

My Dear Wife —

We had a very pleasant dinner at Judge Van Vorst's last night. John Thomas was the Chef at the table. Judges Sedgwick, Curtis, Freedman, Speir Potter, Davis & Porter were present and Mrs. Van Vorst, Mrs. Hilton and Mrs. V. V.'s mother, whom I have met at your Aunt Ma-





[1878]

ria's and who told me the condition of the latter was very critical, never having been as much reduced before as now.

Judge Speir and his family came in five days by steamer from Havana and arrived last Friday much benefited he says by the jaunt.

Judge Davis and Judge Brady go to Europe the 1st of May.

Weather here is bright and pleasant after the gentle rain of yesterday.

Love to Mary.

Yours affectionately,  
Wm. E. Curtis.

Saturday March 30, 1878. The winter has passed pleasantly. It has been mild and healthy. Mrs. Curtis went to Savannah early this month and will remain south until the middle of April.

Sunday May 12, 1878. Mrs. Curtis returned April 11th, in much improved health. On the 20th, I went to Washington passing a week there very pleasantly taking Holbrook with me. Yesterday I received intelligence of the death, on that day, of the Hon. Samuel A. Foot, with whom, for many years I had a business connection. The mention appears in the entry in this volume of May 13th, 1852. The arrangement was beneficial and satisfactory. Our relations were never disturbed by the slightest cloud. I now bid adieu to my venerable and good friend.

Judges Chambers, New Court House.

NEW YORK, Mch. 30th, 1878.

My Dear Wife,

Last night I called at Dr. Thomas', found them in, then went to Mr. Hamersley's, found there Generals Prince, Cullum, Cesnola, de Peyster, Prof. Waterhouse, Hawkins, Talboys of British Legation, Prof. Crosby, Paul Forbes,





[1878]

Paul Du Chaillou, young Hamersley of Hartford, and two or three that I did not know. Came away with Du Chaillou, and walked home, the longest walk in two weeks.

Things are much depressed here and property appears to be going from bad to worse. Waterhouse Hawkins is pretty destitute. Dr. Thomas says it begins to hurt the doctors. People do not send for them as they did.

Love to Mary. I shall answer here letter soon.

Yours affectionately,  
Wm. E. Curtis.

Judges Chambers, New Court House.

NEW YORK, Apl. 3, 1878.

My Dear Wife,

I have only time to say we are all well. The weather is as fine as one could dream of.

The Park beginning to glow with flowering shrubs, and carpeted with verdure.

The Kingsbury girls are here, and they had a parlor full of beaux last night to entertain.

Yours affectionately,  
Wm. E. Curtis.

14 No. 20 St.,  
Oct. 14/78.

My Dear Wife,

I hope you found all well on your arrival at Watertown and that you have not taken cold in consequence of the sudden change to cooler weather.

I looked in at Mr. Robert L. Stewarts' for a little while last evening, and then went to the Century. Met many persons we know there, and was in bed before eleven o'clock. This morning a little before nine I started for Mr. Delafield's. The day has been very beautiful, and I





[1878]

reached there in time to meet and accompany them to Church. I had the pleasure of listening to a very eloquent extempore sermon from the Bishop of Kentucky. Called at F. Goodridges' on our way from Church.

After lunch Mr. & Mrs. D. and myself walked over the ground of some of the finest of the neighboring places, which are all beautiful, and returned in time for dinner, left at 8 P. M. and reached here at 9:30 only breaking our trot up the hills. The moon threw the gas lights in the shade and the drive both ways was very delightful. So much for my day's experience.

Found Mrs. Delafield who was with Mr. D. from Canada much improved but she seemed low spirited. Mr. D's mother and sister were there, both very agreeable, the former one of the brightest and best educated women I ever met.

I will add to this if anything presents in the morning. Love to all.

Yours affectionately,  
Wm. E. Curtis.

Judges Chambers, New Court House.

7:30 P. M.

NEW YORK, Oct. 20, 1878.

My Dear Wife,

. . . . .  
Yesterday I staid in the house except to drive Mr. Wm. P. Powers to the Park late in the afternoon. My solar system was damaged by the decayed oysters the butcher provided Margaret with for our Friday's fasting.

. . . . .  
Love to Mary & Bessie.

I am yours affectionately,  
Wm. E. Curtis.

Saturday June 14th, 1878. I have just come from the funeral of my old friend, Wm. Cullen Bryant. He died on Thursday, aged 85. We were pall bearers at Mr. Ver-





[1878 and 1879]

planck's funeral 8 years ago. How those whose society charmed me at "The Century" have passed away. My journal is a mortuary record. There leavetakings are frequent, and mine will come how soon?

My son, Holbrook, went to Europe per steamer Abyssinia on Wednesday to pursue his professional studies. He accompanies Dr. Francis Bacon, of New Haven, in whose office he is a student.

Sunday, Sept. 29, 1878. Fifty-five years old today. Am at Watertown where the summer vacation has passed away pleasantly. All well.

Sunday, Nov. 17th. Attended Trinity College Trustees' meeting in the New Buildings yesterday. Saw three columns standing, all that remained of the old chapel and Buildings. Family removed here from Conn. two weeks ago yesterday.

Monday, March 3, 1879. On the 27th of Nov. I was taken ill with an abscess of the right ear. Suffered much pain. Erysipelas of the head commenced Dec. 8th and continued for several weeks with increased pain and total blindness from the swelling of my face for about a week.

I am now better, drive out in a closed carriage every day and hope to walk out soon. I have suffered great pain and am grateful to kind Providence that I am no worse.

Thursday, April 7th, 1879. The 11th of March I left for Charleston. I remained until the 11th of April, when I left for New York arriving at 10:30 p. m., April 12. Mrs. Curtis and Mary accompanied me. Am strengthened and refreshed by my journey, but not cured. It seems cold and wet here after a month of sunshine and warm weather. I hope in a few days to resume my public duties.

### *3rd. Journey to Europe.*

May 7, 1879. Left New York with my son, William, on board the Scythia and arrived in Liverpool on the 17th after a very tranquil and pleasant passage. Made a plea-





*Judge William Edmond Curtis*











[1879]

sant visit at Oxford. Passed 9 days in London. May 31st, went to Paris. June 9th, went to Geneva. July 10th, went to Neufchatel and thence to Basle and July 11th to Heidelberg. 14th inst. to Mayence, 15th to Cologne, 16th to Brussels, 21st inst. to London, crossing the Channel in a wild storm. Ill in London. 26th inst., went to Brighton. 30th inst., went to Ventnor, Isle of Wight. Aug. 4th, went to Salisbury. 7th went to Leamington, 11th inst., went to York. 12th inst., to Edinburgh, 16th to Keswick and 21st inst. to Liverpool. Sailed for New York Aug. 30th, and a stormy passage with head winds; we reached home Sept. 2nd. All well but Sanford.

WHITE HART HOTEL,  
Salisbury.

Wednesday, Aug. 6th, 1879

My Dear Wife:

I was made happy this morning by the receipt of yours of July 24th and 25th from Block Island. I was glad to learn of your renewed health, and hope you will stay there as long as you receive benefit. Don't be afraid of growing stout, in fact you and Alla look the better for it. I wish I could have been at Block Island with you, but I do not intend to bother about what I cannot help. Monday we went by sail to Cowes, then by steamer to South Hampton and thence by rail to this place. I had not forgotten this cathedral which pleases me the most of any, but yet I found so much to admire that I overlooked before, that I feel that I am fully compensated. Tuesday W. and I drove nine miles out to Stonehenge over the plains and hills of Salisbury, seeing multitudes of black-faced sheep feeding on the grass, and watched by weather-beaten shepherds and shepherdesses, most of them eating large slices or chunks of bread. Not romantic. We returned passing the ancient Saxon and Roman fortified hill of old Sarum. This morning W. and I drove 12 miles down the river Avon to Mrs.





[1879]

Venable's residence. A charming drive through the loveliest part of England, only three showers on the way. Such sheep and such turnips. We found Mrs. Venable's mother and her sister, Miss King, and Holbrook and Mrs. V. soon came in. We lunched there very pleasantly and returned in alternate sunshine and showers at 4 p. m. H. arrived there on Monday, has made a painting of the place, and has accepted invitations for all the time until he leaves there next Tuesday, and seems well and busy. He sees the inside of the houses of the country families, a privilege seldom accorded to passing travellers. I intended to have done some more visiting in England, but it is too cold and wet for me. Shall probably go from here tomorrow to Bath or Leamington. Mrs. and Miss K. left by rail for her son's this P. M. but will stay at this hotel until tomorrow and I find an invitation for W. and myself to take coffee with them this evening.

Love to all. Thank Mary for her sweet letter to me. W. is out for a walk.

Yours affectionately,  
Wm. E. Curtis.

Monday, Sept. 29th, 1879. Fifty-six years old today. Am at Watertown and have attended to judicial duties through September.

Sunday, Oct., 12th. Mrs. Curtis and Randolph are with Sanford in the Adirondacks. Will, Holbrook and myself are keeping house in New York.

Thursday, Nov. 27, 1879. Thanksgiving Day. Passed in town quietly with my family. A year ago today I was taken ill; though yet suffering from its legacies I give thanks for this prolongation of my life for the sake of my family.

Christmas, 1879. Clouds and rain confine me to the house. Randolph has gone to the Adirondacks to visit Sanford who remains there hoping to restore his health in the atmosphere of the forests. The rest of the family are here making merry over Christmas.





*Mrs. William Edmond Curtis*











[1880]

New Year's, 1880. The afternoon sunshine tempted me to make a few calls. Temperature mild and visits agreeable. This ancient custom is dying out apparently.

The End.

It is seldom that a man succeeds in being the sort of person and having the career that he wished; but from the meeting of the Bar Association, and the newspaper clippings after my father's death, it seems as though he had attained everything in life that he most desired.

None of his children died before him, but the following year, Eustace Sanford, who was born in 1860, and who outgrew his strength, measuring six foot four at fifteen, died in July at Watertown. Francis Randolph was the next in 1892, then Mary Alatheia in 1916, Holbrook 1920, and William 1923.

The last thing my father did was to go to Commencement at Trinity. My mother accompanied him and in her calendar she wrote under that date "my last happy day." After an illness of less than a week my father passed quietly away.

*JUDGE W. E. CURTIS BURIED.*

(New York World — July 10th, 1880.)

*Many New York Judges and Lawyers at the Funeral of the Seventh Chief Justice of the Superior Court.*

Chief Justice William E. Curtis was buried yesterday after services at his summer residence, the old homestead of the Curtis family at Watertown, Conn. A special car attached to the 8:05 New Haven express train from New York took up a large party of New Yorkers, including the Associate Judges of the Superior Court, John J. Freedman, Gilbert M. Speir, Hooper C. Von Vorst and John Sedgwick, Judge Sanford being unavoidably absent, and among others, Edwin W. Stoughton, Abram S. Hewitt, Aaron J. Vanderpoel, Charles Tracy, Lewis L. Delafield, W. P.





[1880]

Power, H. P. Marshall, J. S. Stearns, Judge R. S. Larremore, of the Common Pleas, ex-Judge Davies, Professor John C. Draper, of the College of the City of New York, and Mrs. Draper. Thomas Boese, the Clerk of the Superior Court, is in Canada. A. T. Warburton, the stenographer of the court since the introduction of stenographic reports some twenty years ago, Wilson Small, William Haviland and J. McK. McCarthy of the clerk's office, and Court Officers McDonald and Hallahan were of the party. At Bridgeport and other places accessions to the party were received, among them Dr. W. W. Williams, of St. George's Church, in this city, of which Judge Curtis was a Vestryman; Dr. Pynchon, President of Trinity College, Hartford; Professors E. E. Johnson and Samuel Hart, also of Trinity College, of which Judge Curtis had been a Trustee; Charles R. Chapman, of Hartford; Wm. Watson, E. M. Scudder, W. H. Scott, W. D. Edmonds, A. D. Appleton, Professor Francis Wayland, of the Yale Law School; F. J. Kingsbury of Waterbury, a brother-in-law of Mrs. Curtis; L. W. Cutler of Watertown, and Chief-Justice O. S. Seymour, of Litchfield.

It had been the expressed wish of Judge Curtis that there should be no funeral oration or address of any kind and simply the Episcopal burial service was read. The pall-bearers were E. W. Stoughton, A. S. Hewitt, A. J. Vanderpoel, Chas. Tracy, Judge Hooper C. Van Vorst, L. L. Delafield, Judge Gilbert M. Spier, N. P. Power, Judge John J. Freedman, Judge Sedgwick, H. P. Marshall, J. S. Stearns and Judge R. L. Larremore. In and about the house were many friends of the family from Watertown and the neighborhood. The remains lay in the parlor in an oaken casket covered with black cloth. Christ Church stands just across the village green and as 4 o'clock the bell began to toll from the modest church tower the casket was carried over to the church, followed by the pall-bearers and by the 7 children and the widow of the dead Judge.







The procession was met at Christ Church door by the Rev. R. J. Stoddard, the pastor; Dr. Pynchon, of Hartford, and Dr. Williams, of New York. The church was filled. The hymn selected for the service was Dr. Muhlenberg's "I Would not Live Alway." At the conclusion of the service the procession was reformed and the coffin was carried to the Evergreen Cemetery a little way down the road, and here in a grave beside his father and mother the Chief-Justice was laid.

On the way back to the city Mr. Abram S. Hewitt said of Chief Justice Curtis: "He was a good, average man, well balanced morally, mentally and physically. He was capable of any amount of work, and was never weary of working. Whatever he did undertake to do he did thoroughly, honestly and conscientiously, and how well thousands of his clients know. He was more particularly skilled in commercial law and in the application of the law to manufacturing concerns. He was a French scholar, and having business which took him to France, made long visits there. He was a member of the Century Club in New York, and of the Manhattan and Union Clubs. He made a special study of education, and besides being for a time President of the New York Board of Education, made an intelligent study of educational systems abroad and was never tired of studying the methods and text-books of other countries. This interest he continued up to the time of his death, and only a week or two ago he was up at Hartford and down at Yale to see his son, F. Randolph Curtis, graduated. His five sons — William E., Holbrook, F. Randolph, Sanford and Kingsbury — have each of them been well educated. William E. Curtis is now a practicing lawyer. Holbrook is a young physician with a thorough schooling here and abroad. Randolph will follow the law. Chief-Justice Curtis was a member of the Geographical and Historical societies, and a working member too. He never held a political office except that of Judge of the Superior Court.







[1880]

He did not seek the judgeship, but just at that time in 1871, the people were determined to have honest men in office, and I went to Mr. Curtis and urged him to accept the nomination. He was proposed by Appollo Hall and ratified by the Republicans, while Mr. Sedgwick was proposed by the Republicans and was accepted by the Democrats. He had an interest in the Scovill Brass Works at Waterbury, and in other of the manufacturing establishments along the Naugatuck River. He was for many years the private counsel of Chas. Goodyear, the original india rubber patentee. When he was elected to the bench he gave up his private practice."

*CHIEF JUDGE CURTIS.*

(Law Register, Oct. 27, 1880)

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A largely attended meeting of the members of the Bar of this city, in memory of the Late Chief Judge William E. Curtis, was held yesterday afternoon in the General Term room of the Supreme Court. The Judges of the Supreme, Superior, Common Pleas and Marine Courts and Court of General Sessions entered in a body by the side door, taking seats within the railing surrounding the Bench. Mr. Delafield called the meeting to order, and named Chief Justice Davis, of the Supreme Court, as chairman. The following gentlemen were chosen as vice-presidents, and took their seats upon the bench:

Hon. John Sedgwick, Chief Judge of the Superior Court; Hon. Chas. P. Daly, Chief Judge of the Court of Common Pleas; Hon. Samuel Blatchford, Judge of the United States Circuit Court; Hon. Wm. G. Choate, Judge of the United States District Court; Hon. Charles L. Benedict, Judge of the United States District Court, Hon. Delano C. Calvin, Surrogate; Hon. Frederick Smyth, Recorder; Hon. H. A. Gildersleeve, City Judge.

Mr. Brainerd nominated as secretaries Mr. Clifford A. Hand, Mr. John L. Cadwalader and Mr. John McL. Nash.





Mr. Charles Tracy offered the following resolution, which was unanimously adopted:

*RESOLVED*: That the Hon. William E. Curtis, during his practice at the Bar in this city for more than twenty-five years, and his service for the last eight years on the Bench of the Superior Court, of which he was Chief Judge since October, 1876, by his ability, learning, integrity and courtesy, gained our strong respect and esteem; and we share largely in the public sorrow caused by his death. His balanced mind and calm temper bore the labors and cares, sometimes perplexing, of the judicial office with patience, impartiality and dignity; and in private life, his pure character, high principles, varied attainments and true refinement and modesty, made him attractive as a companion and personal friend. It is a grateful, though sad, duty, as he passes from among us, thus to record our appreciation of his public and private worth.

Judge Van Vorst, in speaking to the resolution said:

Mr. President and Gentlemen of the Bar: It is eminently fitting that the death of a good Judge should not be allowed to pass without appropriate notice and action by his contemporaries of the Bar and Bench. The memory of those who have well filled their part in the administration of justice and in the responsible and useful places of life should be dearly cherished and sedulously preserved. I have yeilded to wishes of my brethren in the Court over which Judge Curtis lately presided, in appearing today to speak of its appreciation of his excellent character and qualities as a citizen and a Judge, and to express its sense of the great loss it has sustained in his death.

Chief Justice Curtis was born in Litchfield County, Conn., in September 1823. He was descended from worthy ancestors, who came to this country as early as the year 1632, and settled Stratford, Conn. Among them are to be found both legislators and Judges, whose lives reach back to the early days in our national history. His grandfather rep-







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resented Connecticut in Congress towards the close of the last century, and was for many years one of the Judges of the Supreme Court of Errors in that State, and his great grandfather, Benjamin Paine, in colonial days, sat with the Governor in the High Court of Appeals in the colony of Connecticut. His father, Holbrook Curtis, was a sound lawyer, and was held in the highest esteem as a man in the county in which he lived. He, too, in the end attained to judicial station in the community which demanded his services. The traditions and spirit of such preceding lives must needs leave their indelible mark upon those who spring from them. And Wm. E. Curtis was truly loyal to the good name and report of his ancestors, and has left in the record of his own life no act to mar the fairness of his family escutcheon. He was well educated in the broad sense in which that term is used with us. He was graduated at Trinity College, Conn. But his education did not end with his college days, nor did he on receiving his diploma lay aside his books. He was always a thoughtful student. His aim appeared to have been to thoroughly educate himself for a life of extended usefulness in every walk and relation. So that he was not only a good Latin scholar and familiar with the Greek, but he also acquired a familiar knowledge of the French, Spanish and other modern languages. As it was his intention, early formed, to study and practice the profession of the law in the City of New York, he knew well enough how serviceable to him and others — with whom in the prosecution of a commercial practice he might be brought in communication — would be a familiar knowledge of the modern languages. He studied law in this city with that admirable and highly gifted lawyer and advocate, William Curtis Noyes, and was admitted to the practice of the profession in the year 1846. One cannot speak too warmly of his character as a counsellor in his profession, and as an advocate. His practice was large, not only in the State but in the Federal Courts.







And all who had business relations with him, lawyers and clients, individuals and corporations, bear uniform testimony to the fairness of his dealings, and to his intelligent and upright conduct on all occasions. He seemed to have an intuitive idea of right and justice, from which he never swerved. He was a safe guardian of every interest committed to his management, and allowed no selfish purpose to swerve him from entire justice to others. This sentiment was carried in instances to self-sacrifice. He was a large-minded-man, and the current of his thoughts and action was limited by no narrow bounds; it deepened and widened according to the subject he was called upon to consider. But although he was actively engaged in the practice of law, and never slighted the demands it made upon his time and thoughts, he was not unmindful of other claims and interests upon him outside of his profession. He was the head of a large household, well managed and ordered. The affairs of his family were ever near his heart, and were affectionately and wisely adjusted. He was a tender husband and a kind and considerate father. He took, as one would well suppose he might, a deep interest in the cause of common school education, and was for several years a Commissioner of Education, and finally became the president of its board, and kept up until the last his concern for the system. He quite well understood the duty of the State with regard to the education of its youth, and the caution needed in wisely administering the system so that the true end should be reached — the formation of an intelligent and upright citizenship. And when, after a considerable practice at his profession, he had reached an age and gained an experience which fitted him for the station, the advocate with an unblemished record was advanced, by the choice of the community and with the approval of the Bar, to be a Judge of the Superior Court. This office he had held, at the time of his death, for a period of eight years and upwards. The volumes of the reports of the Court in







[1880]

which, in the end, he came to be Chief Justice, contain the opinions and judgments pronounced by him in many important controversies, and exhibit the truly judicial training and cast of his mind, and bring out in clear relief the sound sense, the clear intelligence, and the prevailing love of justice and equity which always influenced his judgment. No technical quibbles, no refinements of casuistry, could break into the notions of right and wrong which is own common sense suggested to him. The most of you who are now present, and who have often appeared before him, have observed his dignified and courteous deportment on the Bench, as well as the ever-present patience and considerate attention which characterized him when he presided at trials. He never ceased to be the true gentleman. Not only counsel engaged, young and old, but parties, witnesses and jurymen, shared the quieting influence of his conduct and bearing as a Judge. In the causes tried before him on the equity side of the Court, which often demand consideration, and on appeals to the General Term, he was always prompt in rendering his decisions. This proceeded from his thorough training and business habits, strengthened by the conviction that tardy justice was often its virtual denial. In his consultations with his brethren he was always ready at the appointed time with his opinions. I have rarely known of an instance of failure in this regard. He was always prepared to give a respectful consideration to dissenting views. He would not cling tenaciously or unreasonably to a conclusion which he had reached. In the presence of a sounder and better view, he would yield. His judicial office and duties always received his first attention, and although interested in other concerns, he never allowed them to interfere with his obligations to the Court. I have said that even during his judicial term other interests of moment engaged him. Societies and associations, literary, social, scientific and benevolent, all held an appropriate place in his regard, and their claims were acknowledged and satisfied. Now







[1880]

such a character as we find developed in Judge Curtis would still be incomplete without a religious element, and this prevailed in him to a large degree. But, although his faith was clear and distinct and according to the traditions of his ancestors, yet it was broad, and made no approach to bigotry. His ideas were Catholic. He was charitable in his judgments of others, and ever respected their honest opinions as to questions subjective or objective. He lived and died in the faith of his fathers, and from his father's house, which he had inherited, surrounded by its lawns and trees, in the beautiful village of Watertown, and which he so much loved, and to which he always gladly went when the summer vacation arrived, his remains, surrounded by a sorrowing family, were borne to the church on the adjoining square. This church was well filled on that bright summer morning with the people of the place, many of whom had known him in his early life and looked upon his career of usefulness and honor in this metropolis with interest and pride, and who had come to take a last farewell of him on earth, and to accompany the casket which contained his remains to its quiet resting place in the neighboring cemetery. He died and was buried as we may well consider he could have wished. The late Chief Justice of the Court of Appeals, at the summons of the angel of death, left the judicial work upon which he was at the moment engaged. That summer rest to which Judge Curtis looked forward, at Watertown, to fit him for the discharge of duties in the fall, he has exchanged for the unbroken rest which eternity unfolds to the wearied ones of this mortal life. What can I say more of our departed friend? His commanding presence, his excellent judgment, his social virtues, his pure conversation enriched by extensive reading and much observant travel, his sympathetic nature and kind offices, remain with us now only as a memory. I lay these few leaves, moistened with tears, upon his bier, upon which are written our precious thoughts of him, and the lasting regard





[1880]

in which his memory is held among those who knew him well. There is no foul spot to sully the fair record of his life. It is clear and stainless as the lawn which symbolizes his office. We, upon whom the warm light of his life fell, and who were strengthened by his unfaltering purpose "to do justly, love mercy and walk humbly," may well deplore his death and seek to preserve to others who come after, for their guidance, comfort and encouragement, the record of a good and a true life as a man, an advocate and a Judge.

Mr Henry J. Scudder spoke feelingly of his recollections of the Chief Justice, running through years of exceptional intimacy, and referring to his love of the classics, related that in joining in the worship in the Episcopal Church, which he attended, Mr. Curtis uttered the responses in the Greek tongue.

Mr. A. J. Vanderpoel, who next spoke, in the course of his remarks, said: "Four years since, you presided at the meeting of the Bar convened on the occasion of the death of Chief Justice Monell. Judge Curtis met with us, and was assigned by his brother members of the Court to express their sorrow in their bereavement. The aptness and beauty of his address on that occasion was striking. It was a just tribute to one whom your Honor then characterized as 'a man who worthily bore the great honors he worthily enjoyed' a sentiment which applies equally well to his successor.

Mr. Edwin W. Stoughton, the next speaker, referred in glowing terms to the high character and noble qualities of the Chief Justice and among other things said: "He was so gentle and so kind, never uttering a harsh word, always forgetting himself, never seeming to be absorbed in anything or by anything but the desire to make those about him happy. On the Bench, we all know his record. I believe the younger members of the Bar loved him, and those who were before him or occupied exalted position upon the Bench know how grateful the younger members





of the Bar are for kindness, and they know how a little unkindness wounds and how long it takes for such wounds to heal. They know that the gratitude which a young man feels for kindness from distinguished members of the Bench lasts during his life. I have some such memories. They never grow less."

Mr. John E. Parsons then offered the following resolution, which was carried:

*RESOLVED.* That a copy of the resolutions be furnished to the family of the late Chief Judge Curtis, and that a record of the proceedings of this meeting be presented to the General Term of the Superior Court, with the request that it be entered upon the minutes of that Court.





[1893]

William Edmond Curtis, Jr. was born in New York June 2nd, 1855, graduated from Trinity College, Hartford, 1877 B. A., in 1878 M. A., and in 1902 L.L. D. He began the practice of law with his father's former associate, Mr. James Stearns, and was more or less interested in politics when Mr. Cleveland appointed him assistant secretary of the Treasury in 1893. He had already shown an aptitude for financial problems and with an extremely clear mind that seized upon the vital point of any question, was well fitted to assume responsibility. It was always a regret to his family that he never became a judge, for his careful, logical, view of a situation would have rendered his opinion of great value. When in the Autumn of 1894 it became apparent that Congress would do nothing to come to the rescue of the Treasury, of which the gold reserve was so depleted by the Sherman law and the silver men of the West, that the country would have been bankrupt in one month; my brother began to investigate what had been done after the Civil War in a like emergency. He discovered that there was a law (section 3700) which had never been repealed, which enabled Congress to sell bonds abroad and import the necessary gold in that way. Being already in touch with the New York bankers, (Mr. Carlisle was from Kentucky and also had other affairs on his hands) William suggested, and, with the assistance of Mr. Morgan and Mr. Belmont, put through, the sale of bonds in England that saved the country in an hour of need. Mr. Francis Lynde Stetson told an old family friend that William went to him and urged him in his capacity as Mr. Morgan's lawyer to convince him of the necessity for the bankers coming to the assistance of the government and of the legality of statute 3700. Mr. Morgan gallantly stepped into the breach, demonstrating to Mr. Cleveland the expediency of this method of procedure and the impending ruin did the gold give out. Mr. Jordan, the Ass. Treasurer at New York, had planned with William buying gold bars to stave off the





*William Edmond Curtis*











[1893]

crash and at this time he wrote to him in his own hand eight or more pages of reports every day. The terrible anxiety of all who were cognizant of the threatened catastrophe breathes from every word. Bryan was called the friend of the people, but if by his short sighted free silver policy the people had gone hungry and poor, what would then have been his title? When "the great Commoner" sent word to the Kaiser by Von Bernstorff in 1917 that the Country was not with President Wilson and that we did not wish to fight Germany, he showed the same sublime crookedness of vision that caused his espousal of the Anti-Evolution doctrine in the South. Although Cleveland and his cabinet were for sound money to a man, Mr. Hamlin, Will's confrere, the second assistant secretary, went over to Bryan and made speechifying tours through Massachusetts for his election. William's speeches at various public dinners, etc., elucidating the financial situation, are most excellent documents, and are all preserved in the scrap book which my mother had made of clippings about his career. Here is a letter from her in regard to his Treasury appointment.

Charleston Hotel,  
Charleston, S. C.,  
March 30, 1893.

My Dear Will,

All your letters to Berwick arrived this morning. You must make your own decision as to what is best for yourself, without regard to me. I think it a point on which you only can judge. If you do not take the place yourself, cannot you get it for Monroe. I would certainly not take any appointment in New York. I am feeling much better, in fact feel very well today. It is cool and delicious. I think it very complimentary to have the place offered you. I only hope people will know that to be the fact, and not think you worked for spoils or have been running on to Washington seeking for it. I am glad you get a little fun out





[1894]

of it for you certainly worked very hard in the winter. I think if you can, I would go to Chicago. Reports are so contradictory.

Your loving Mama

To Mrs. W. E. Curtis

1740 M Street

Washington

D. C.

UNIVERSITY CLUB

Madison Square

Sunday Feb. 25th 1894

Dear Mother,

I have had a very lively time. The mercury was 10° at 3 p. m. yesterday with a high wind & my ulster was most useful. The Opera was superb on Friday night & H. (Holbrook) & I went to the Vaudeville Club afterwards & had a regular spree. I dined at the Democratic Club last night & attended the entertainment here. The latter lasted till 3 a. m.

I am overwhelmed with invitations on all sides for dinners, theatres, &c but I am pretty busy. Yesterday I did not go down town. Tell Carter to get you the Tribune of last week which contained the attack upon the assistant Secretary's carriages. The Republicans used them for twenty years!

Love to all.

Yours Aff'y

(Sgd) Will.

P. S.

Harry Marshall said last night that Bess is considered a genius & he has heard artists, who have seen her work, say, that she is one of the "coming artists of the country."





[1894]

TREASURY DEPARTMENT  
WASHINGTON.

June 26th, 1894.

Dear Mother:

I have your amusing letter about the dream. I see no prospective realization of it. Pity it is not a satisfactory person! Next time it will probably be a *negress*! I spent nearly two hours with the President yesterday after office hours and the result is in the papers today. Mr. Carlisle got back late last night. I dined at the Club and did not get to the Inn until 10:30 p. m. I had a breeze all night, and I think the arrangement fine and a great relief to me. I have a bunch of your letters in my pocket which I have not had time to answer carefully, but hope to do so in a day or two. Tryon, Rush and Rogers are coming out to dine with me tonight. I will look out for a seat in Church. I may go to New York this week for a day. Cannot tell yet. Wike goes off for a month July 1st, and the Secretary and I are to run things alone.

Love to all,

Yours affectionately,  
Will.

P. S. The President is very well and in fine spirits and *belligerent*!

TREASURY DEPARTMENT  
WASHINGTON.

July 7th, 1894.

Dear Mother:

I was awfully busy yesterday and did not get a minute to write you a line. The Secretary came here with his clerk for a few minutes today and did a little business. He goes to the President this afternoon.

We are all very much bothered by the strikes at Chicago, and elsewhere, but the newspaper reports are frightfully exaggerated. I think Altgeld ought to be whipped.





[1894]

I had a long talk with the President yesterday at the Secretary's request. He proposes to stand up and stamp this out if it takes the whole army and militia to do it. I wired you this morning that I was busy yesterday and could not write.

Col. Monroe turned up this morning and I asked him to go out with me to Chevy Chase this evening to dine. Saw Lamont this morning. He has his hands full.

Yours affectionately,  
Will.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT  
WASHINGTON.

July 10, 1894.

Dear Mother:

I stopped in town last night and enjoyed the coolness. Had some fine tennis with the Att. Gen. et al. in the afternoon, and I hope for golf today. The reports show the situation is improving, but if all the trades unions in the country are called out, as they proposed, I do not know what may be the result. They are not getting the sympathy which they expected and I hope the question will be fought out in the end. It must come, and better now, than later in the Administration. The President's proclamations have an excellent effect and they make people stop and think. I think there will be less fusion movements among the Democrats hereafter. If the newspapers would only *tell the truth*. It would also help matters. Wike leaves tonight, and Carlisle and I will be alone for a month. The President will designate an acting assistant in his place. This insures my vacation.

Love to all,

Yours affectionately,  
Will.





[1894]

CHEVY CHASE INN,  
Chevy Chase, Md.

July 23, 1894.

Dear Mother:

I did not have time to write today in town. Carlisle did not arrive until four and then I had a long talk with him about the President's letter, etc., and his interview of last April. He explained it all and it is quite interesting. They all seem to have been playing at cross purposes. Gorman made a very bitter speech this afternoon and everyone is keyed up to the top notch. I saw Lamont this morning and he thought it would come out all right and the President is very confident. Tomorrow will probably decide the question. It has rained all day and the people are delighted. The lawns are already losing the dull, brown color of the past six weeks. I got your letter of Saturday and am glad King got his vacation. I presume you saw that Macfarlane had been confirmed. It is very satisfactory to us and we are all greatly pleased. I am hoping to see Thornton Warren made one of the junior assistants. I hope you will keep me informed about the parsons who make their various bows on approbation. Tomorrow is to be cool and clear, and I hope to get some golf and stay in town all night. We have fires here this evening and they are very comfortable.

Yours affectionately,  
Will.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT  
WASHINGTON.

July 27th, 1894.

Dear Mother:

Today is the hottest yet and some humidity too, but not much. Mercury 109 in the shade out on the corner by Riggs' Bank, where it gets the reflected heat from the asphalt. It is 94 in my room, but there is a good breeze and





[1894]

I am *not at all uncomfortable*. My electric fan is whirling away in great shape. I got a letter from Delia Gurnee in Paris today. They are coming back in August. Her father is better. They want me to go to Bar Harbor with them. Isabel Montant is at Carlsbad and "*They hope*" she will improve. Got a letter from Soley and a card from his agent here. They begin repairs next week. I am glad you enjoyed Miss Shelton's visit.\* I was very sorry to miss her. I am glad the Sanfords like it. Do not bother about Cleveland's "strain of sadness" in his letter, it don't exist in his feelings I am quite sure. The situation improves for a bill daily. Vilas made a good speech yesterday and I had a chat with him and Justice White at the Inn last night. Also had the French Ambassador and Austrian Charge d'Affaires at dinner.

Yours affectionately,  
Will.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT  
WASHINGTON.

August 3rd, 1894.

Dear Mother:

Wike got back this morning, so I am somewhat relieved. Senator Smith was in here just now and said that he had agreed to a measure which he thought would pass and that the negotiations might be completed at any moment. If the adjournment takes place next week I shall get away as soon as the Secretary decides upon his plans. We will not both go away at the same time. Gold affairs look better today also. I am still hoping to get up my Berkley story. I have so much to do for campaign speakers on the money question out of hours that I am driven to death. Had some tennis with the Attorney General, Theodore Roosevelt and Binney last night. Went out to the Inn for dinner and bed. It was quite comfortable this morning

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\*Same who were in my father's journal 1849.





[1894]

as it was cloudy but now it is muggy again and looks like rain. I have the two cheques for Smith and expenses and send you some bills. I thought this de Luze bill was paid. If I can only get off for a few days this month I think I will go to Narraganset Pier, after I have looked in on you, and take the rest of the time later at Watertown and Southhamp-ton where I can get some good exercise. I think some sea baths just now would be good for me. I am keeping your letters to see that they are all answered some day. I have Bessie's illustrated effusion. It was quite good.

Love to all.

Yours affectionately,  
Will.

P. S. I have an appointment with Hoke Smith *to instruct him upon the money question at 4:30.*

TREASURY DEPARTMENT  
WASHINGTON.

August 13, 1894.

Dear Mother:

Just got your wire. Don't change any plans on my account as I am absolutely uncertain. I expect to go to New York tomorrow afternoon on business. If Congress should decide to adjourn immediately I would *probably* go on for a week, or ten days, vacation, in which event my plan was to go to see you for a few days and go to Narragansett Pier on the 20th for the time I had left. If you are not in Watertown, I will go to Narragansett directly, or to wherever you may be. It is quite immaterial. I shall then come back here until Hamlin returns when I shall go off for three weeks in Sept. and Oct. The Secretary leaves when I get back. Had Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Price at the Inn over Sunday and enjoyed it very much indeed. I have various memo. from your letters *re* filter, furniture, etc., etc., which I will talk with you about when I see you. Just got word that the Democratic caucus have agreed to accept the





[1895]

Senate bill and take measures to pass free coal, iron, and sugar bills. It will take some time to get these later bills through, but I presume that we will get the Senate Bill tomorrow. I doubt whether the President will approve it if they stay in Session long enough (10 days) to make it a law without. There is a possibility of a veto. The Secretary does not like the situation at all nor does the Administration generally. Nothing else except it rained all day, yesterday it was and is cool and pleasant. Had some golf last Saturday.

Love to all,

Yours affectionately,

Will.

P. S. Will be at the University Club, N. Y. Wednesday morning.

(As the gold situation became worse Will was constantly in New York and the following letter was written to Secretary Carlisle just before the negotiation for the sale of bonds abroad — )

### UNIVERSITY CLUB

Madison Square.

30 January, 1895.

10 P. M.

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I have been with B. since 7:15 and just left him. He has cabled to learn whether foreigners would do anything with the 5s at all and expects an answer in the morning. He does not think it will be favorable. He says that the selling of American Securities must be stopped by inspiring foreigners with confidence and until that is done the gold must go to them. He says he tried to see Stillman today and failed, but saw Baker. They decided that \$100,000,000. was necessary with an option for \$100,000,000. more if desired. Syndicate to be arranged to take 1/3 here and 2/3

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\*Probably Bacon of the Morgan firm as Mr. Jordan mentioned him.





abroad. They think this figure only would help situation and loan of \$50,000,000. would have little or no effect even if taken locally wholly. B. says action must be *immediate* in his opinion. †Jordan was here to meet me. He lost over \$3,000,000. today. Thinks he can hold on until Saturday night and tomorrow may decide. Urges immediate action as necessary. Look at Meline's gold statement of tomorrow morning showing transfers made and to come. People seem scared and panicky in the club. I have seen no one on this business except B. and Jordan. Reporters were on the train, at the ferry and elsewhere. Impossible to elude them or do anything but hold one's tongue. If you will call me up at the Club here at *half past nine* tomorrow from the long distance telephone in my office I would like instructions. First: To whom shall I talk? (B. evidently would like to try to arrange the syndicate if you decide to go ahead, but shall we not make some advances elsewhere, through him or personally?) Second: What representations can I make, if any, as to the intentions of the Government? I think it should be decided at once whether a bond issue should be made or not. If the former and to a syndicate the amount, terms, method etc. to be suggested by B. and such others as you may name and to be approved by you. If there is to be no issue, it should be so stated at once. B. thinks we have overstayed our time. The question also as to the probable effect of suspension with a bond issue pending, or advertised for, must be well thought out. If we decide upon an issue *by advertisement*, they should be printed tomorrow, proposals to be handed in and opened at the Treasury next Monday. *This time* have provisions made for allotment, if necessary, and take the highest; no "all or none." I think the country *might* respond to this. Installments after first round amount to be easy and in gold. This is a personal opinion merely. I feel the responsibility here and would like to divide it. I sent a note to F. but got no

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†Assistant U. S. Treasurer, New York.





[1895]

answer and think he may be away. You of course know the Congressional outlook. I do not and my views are simply based on what I see here. I send this by special delivery.

Yours truly,  
W. E. Curtis.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT

Office of the Secretary,  
Feb'y. 1st, 1895.

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Mr. Morgan has just telephoned me to bring over counter proposition on any of his points not agreed to. Also, that in the paragraph about cooperation he meant he wanted the *commercial assistance* of the Treasury, and that the business would be facilitated and not delayed to obtain legal opinions on points settled by custom in financial affairs and not involving money risks to the government. As to the interpretation of "coin in bonds," see "Specie Resumption & Refunding of the National Debt" (being letters etc. sent to Congress by Secretary Sherman on the subject) pages 20, 22 etc.

Yours truly,  
W. E. Curtis.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT

Office of the Secretary,  
Feb'y. 4th, 1895.  
3:20 P. M.

I have heard from Mr. Morgan. He and Mr. Belmont were together. I told them that the Atty. Gen.\* had finally decided that the old fours would be open to the objection as to their validity. He said he would cable this to London. I also said I would send a messenger by the midnight train

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\*Mr. Richard Olney was Attorney General until the death of Mr. Gresham Secretary of State, when he was given that office.





[1895]

on other matters. He asked what the other open questions were and I said that among other things the rate was too stiff. He said it was based on foreign advices which agreed as to market, but he and Mr. B. would come over if you wished and consult upon that point if the others were settled and he could wait until receipt of messages tomorrow morning before saying anything further to foreigners, except that the 30 year fours must be used.

W. E. C.

The following was written just before the conference when Mr. Morgan, Mr. Olney, Mr. Carlisle and the President decided upon the expedient which was first suggested by my brother.

1740 M STREET

Tuesday.

Dear Mr. Secretary:

If the Attorney General is expected this morning at the President's he had better be informed by telephone as the matter was open yesterday when I saw him.

I am terribly anxious about the popular loan offer *without preliminary arrangements*. I cannot see how we can help the situation without foreign gold in some way. Nothing can apparently be done in New York on the lines we mentioned — i. e. temporary borrowings. The difference in price between quotations for foreign bids and our views is nothing compared with panic and suspension. Do get all the information about the business side of the situation from Morgan, who thinks the situation the most critical since the war and I must say I agree. I will be in my office and you can send for me if wanted. I think a private conversation between you and M. would be advantageous. Pardon all these suggestions, but the matter has kept me awake all night and the slightest hesitancy in the public view will precipitate trouble.

Yours hastily,

W. E. C.





[1895]

Whether he was present at the consultation nobody knows — Mr. Cleveland merely mentioned “a young man.”

William wrote the following letters when he was sent to England with the bonds. Added to much hard work, he had an interesting and entertaining experience.

### HOTEL METROPOLE

May 31st, 1895.

My dear Mother:

When I wrote you last we were running up the Channel and we have now reached our destination and done some other things. We had a most beautiful evening to land. The sky was cloudless and as we passed through the U. S. fleet their bands played and we *howled*, of course. We got to the dock at 6:30 and Col. Montgomery and Mr. Kincaid, consul at Southhampton, were down to meet me with a letter and card from Mr. Bayard so I had no customs examination. We left at 7:50 and reached London a few minutes before 10. Our party had a special compartment and came on most smoothly. It being the “Derby Day” London was crammed with people, but I found a fine room all ready at the Metropole and was most comfortable. Today, however, with the assistance of Mr. Hodson at the Embassy, I found lodgings at 37 Albermarle St., West, which consists of sitting, bed, dressing and bath room for what I pay for one large room here and I move this afternoon. I dine at Mr. Bayard’s house tonight. I have been proposed as a temporary member of the St. James Club (the club of the Diplomatic Corps) and dine with Roosevelt, First Secretary, on Tuesday.

Yesterday I went to the Embassy first and then to Consul General’s office. The latter had arranged a luncheon at the old “Ship and Turtle Tavern,” and we had a most delightful time. I dined here alone, as I was very tired. Went to see Dr. Hamilton in the evening and early to bed. Today I tailored a bit and went again to the Embassy and





[1895]

later had my first interview, by appointment, with Lord Rothschild. He was very agreeable and we settled everything most satisfactorily. Everyone is going away just now for the Whitsuntide holidays and I think I may go over tomorrow and see Cambridge University. I have never been there. We will now have nothing until Tuesday, when I go to Southampton to meet the bonds. The weather is fine and quite warm. I presume I will get the first home letters on Monday. They sent off a small boat with the news of Mr. Gresham's death, which was cabled to me in London and repeated by Col. Montgomery to the signal officer at Hurst Castle.

Love to all.

Yours affectionately,  
Will.

37 Albermarle St.,  
London, W.  
4th June, 1895.

My Dear Mother:

I have moved my plant here from the Metropole, which was crowded and generally horrid. I have a sitting room, bed and bathroom and when the others come they have the floor above. I moved on Friday afternoon, after spending the day in the city and having two interviews with Lord Rothschild. The dinner at Mr. Bayard's was a grand affair. They have a fine house and were most polite. There were 28 at table. The Italian Ambassador was the guest of honor and the others were the Marquis and Marquise of Bath, Lords and Ladies Reay, Brassey, Acton, Baron and Baroness de Worms, Earl of Jersey and Lady Margaret Villiers (Here Mr. Robb called and had a chat). Lord Knutsford, Mrs. Hamilton Aide, Mrs. Adair and various American officials, etc. I took out Miss Bayard and sat between her and Lady Reay. Had a long chat with Lord Jersey while smoking. He has been Gov. General of





[1895]

New South Wales and Lord Brassey is going out now. It was very interesting meeting these people. Roosevelt was very attentive (1st Secretary) and gives a dinner for me tonight. Saturday I went to the City again and to the Exhibition of the Royal Academy in the afternoon. I had the Richardson's to dine with me at the Cafe Monico, where they have music, and then we came here and spent the evening. Met Captain Evans this morning and if I have time at Southampton tomorrow I will go down to luncheon with him on his ship. I expect the party will arrive tomorrow afternoon or evening and I am going down at 9:15 in the morning. I got your first letters today (2) both from the Imperial. Mr. Morgan arrived in London last night and I hope to see him this afternoon. Hope the horses and trip to Watertown will be all right.

Yours affectionately,  
Will.

P. S. I have written General Cumberland and Auntie Randolph.

W.

37 Albermarle St., W.  
June 8th, 1895.

Dear Mother:

I received your pencilled announcement of your safe arrival at Watertown and the clippings. I am glad it all went off properly. I think I wrote you on Tuesday, as I was going to dine with Roosevelt. We had a very pleasant time and the party included all the Embassy people (except Mr. Bayard) and Richardson. Went to the theatre, etc., Wednesday. I left for Southampton at 9:15 to meet the "Paris." Waited about all day with Col. Montgomery and as the ship did not arrive until about 9 p. m. we had to stay all night and come up early Thursday morning. The other party had a very fine passage and we got the *papers* safely into the vault by one o'clock on that day. In





[1895]

the afternoon I went to the weekly reception of the Ambassador with Logan Carlisle and met a great many people. Yesterday we worked all day at Rothschild's office and got about 3,000,000 pounds signed. It required us all to work continuously, but today we have holiday and we all are taking advantage of it. The weather continues beautiful. I have a letter from Auntie Randolph and they are leaving for Kissingen June 20th. I hope to get to Paris a couple of days before they leave. Your letter of the 31st with the account of your birthday has just arrived and the morning papers announce Mr. Olney's appointment as Secretary of State. I will send him my congratulations. Who is judge Harmon? I am glad Mr. Carlisle stays where he is. I don't think I would care to stay under anyone else. I have been made a temporary member of the St. James Club and am now settled. I must go out now. I have a letter from Kingsbury this morning announcing receipt of my cable. Give my love to all. I wish I could have joined in the "kissing bee."

Yours affectionately,

Will.

37 Albermarle St., W.  
London,  
10th June, 1895.

Dear Mother:

I believe I wrote you last on Saturday. Did I tell you that I found Nellie Hotchkiss and Mrs. Eaton on the "Paris?" Mr. Murray gave up his room to them at Southampton and they were greatly obliged. They had engaged nothing in advance, expecting to get in much earlier. Saturday was an awfully hot day here and I put on summer clothes. Roosevelt came for me in his T cart at 4 o'clock and drove me to Osterly Park 9 miles out. It is a beautiful place; 2,000 acres, superb trees and a magnificent house built in 1720 with tapestries, furniture, pictures, etc. kept





[1895]

up till now intact. The house is built very curiously. There are towers at four corners and it has a basement and three stories. It is ugly, being of red brick trimmed with white stone, but the construction of the open court is most peculiar. There were a number of people who came out to tea and there were 24 at dinner, seated at 3 tables. I took out Mrs. Stephen, wife of the Justice and sat next Lady Ancaster. The other people at the table were: Lady Arran and Lady Galway, Lord Jersey, Hon. Lionel Asley and Mr. McKenzie Wallace. Everybody was most kind and agreeable and I had a long chat with Lady Jersey after. You will have to look up all these people in "Burke." Roosevelt could not stay to dinner and I came back by the 11:16 train, being sent to the station by them. I have had various invitations which I have not been able to accept. One for two days in the country at the Gordon's and another to meet Mr. J. P. Morgan at dinner. Yesterday I went to Allan Johnston's to lunch and met Baron Edsteffen and Mrs. Pinchot. Mrs. J. has a boy about four weeks old, but she has not pulled up and they are rather worried about her. He drove me down to the Ranelagh Club at Putney and we played golf. I borrowed a cleeck, driver and lofter and beat him by two holes in the 18 which was pretty good for a strange course and clubs. I hope to get some more shortly. I dined at the St. James Club in the evening with Gus Gurnee and the Babcock boys. The former expects to sail Friday. He left the family at Em's all well.

I have been in the city all day and have not decided what to do tonight. The rest are going to the house of Commons. Frank Stetson came in and I have met many American friends. Gen. Cumberland will be in town tomorrow and so will Willy Kane. Mr. Morgan sails on Wednesday for New York and I am going to try and slip over to Paris while he is on the briny and see Auntie Randolph who goes to Kissingen on the 20th. Clifford Richardson has just come in and asked me to dinner and I have accepted. I





[1895]

presume we will go somewhere afterwards. No rain yet and clear, hot fine days. I have bought some clothes, etc., and I think I will take a leather golf bag for travelling and some clubs for my birthday present. What do Mary and Bessie want especially? Anything? I thought jewelry might be satisfactory.

Give my love to all.

Yours affectionately,  
Will.

37 Albermarle St., W.,  
London.

14th June, 1895.

My dear Mother:

I have your birthday letter and also yours of the 4th and Bessie's amusing scrawl. I am off to Paris in the morning and back on Monday. Auntie Randolph had arranged to go to Kissingen on the 20th with Mrs. Grigg's and it is the only way I could see her. I will stop with them.

We are busy as usual all day. I had a very pleasant dinner at the Carter's on Tuesday and went to Lady Ancaster's dance on Wednesday. Met a number of people and got an invitation to lunch there next week. They are kind and delightful. I also have an invitation to dine at Mrs. Mackay's for July 5th, which I had to decline as my plans for return are so uncertain. I met Mrs. Hewitt and Erskine last evening, and joined them at dinner. Went to see Wyndham in "The Home Secretary" afterward. He was very good and I enjoyed it greatly. The people at the Embassy are very anxious that I should stay over July 1st and be presented in the diplomatic circle at the levee that day. I may do so. Mr. Morgan sailed for New York on Wednesday and we can do nothing, except continue to complete bonds, until he arrives. Much obliged for the slip from the "American," it was very clever.





[1895]

The weather is quite cool again and I am very glad to miss the roasting which you all appear to have had in America. This afternoon we all went to a garden party at Leopole deRothschild's house. It adjoins Ashby house at Hyde Park corner and has a beautiful terrace and garden. We had music by Strauss' band and everyone was there. I met Lady Jersey, Lady Margaret Villiers, her daughter, Lady Reay, Mrs. Adair, the Earl of Arrand, Lord Rothschild and various other acquaintances and had a very good time. Carlisle and I dined together at the Continental and found an excellent table. Murray went to Paris with Louis Howland tonight and returns Sunday night. H. lives there with his mother so it is a great thing for Murray, who is to stop with them. The weather continues fine without rain. I called on Mr. and Mrs. Cady Eaton and Nellie Hotchkiss yesterday, and today they asked me to go to St. Albans with them, but I had to go to the city as usual. I have purchased clothes enough for a year and this time they fit. I will answer your sweet birthday letter after I get my present. I met Miss Furniss (Clementina) at the Roosevelt's reception Tuesday afternoon and find she is stopping nearly opposite. Also met Mr. MacVeagh, Ambassador to Italy and called on him. General Cumberland came in yesterday and brought Kingsbury's wedding present, which he says has been tied up on his library table ever since Mrs. C. put it there. He got my note while he was stopping at Bowerwood, visiting Miss Venables and she sent me an invitation to visit her and he wants me to go to Maidstone after Willie Venables gets through his examinations. I doubt whether I can manage it. I met the *Cheston's* at the Carter's and was delighted to renew my acquaintance. She is as jolly as ever and he is a great golfer and I may go to the country for a couple of days with him to play, if I get through here in time. I have not heard anything special of anyone we know, except Bradley Martin sent me a line yesterday to say that Alice





[1895]

Davies would be here next week. I will write Mary and Bessie next time. I have two letters from King and one from Tryon.

Yours affectionately,

Will.

37 Albermarle St., W.

London,

19th June, 1895.

My dear Mother:

I seize the chance to drop you a line about my Paris trip. I left here on Saturday by the 11 a. m. train for Calais and after a much delayed passage, reached rue Lincoln about 9 p. m. instead of 7. Fortunately, I wired them and they did not wait dinner. I met Willie Burnham at the station here and I enjoyed his society all the way. The weather was fine and the channel smooth. I found all the family in good health and spirits, and they seemed delighted to see me again. I had the same room which I had before and they have the same servants. They made me most comfortable. Sunday morning I went to church at ten o'clock with Auntie Randolph and met lots of people whom I knew, including Fred Martin, who gave me Alice Davies' address. I found Bessie Clift at lunch fatter than ever and quite as voluble. In the afternoon I called on Alice who was out, at the Embassy, and on Mrs. Cruger, who lives next door, at No. 4. I took a drive with her late in the afternoon and got back so late that I missed the early dinner at Aunt R's, but they expected I might not get back. I got my dinner at Mrs. C's and then had a long talk with Mrs. R. when I got back to No. 2. They have leased their apartment for 6 years more, having now occupied it for 13 years. Frank may come out in the autumn, but I doubt it. Mrs. Grigg is going with them in Kissingen.

I took a long walk with Frank before I went to drive and the weather was so beautiful, that all Paris was in the





[1895]

streets. It was very gay and interesting. Monday morning I stayed with them until my departure for the station at 11, when I left them waving their handkerchiefs from the window. Had another smooth journey and reached here about 8 p.m. after a most successful trip. I enjoyed it thoroughly and only regretted that I could not stay longer. They all sent messages to you and the girls and hope to see you over here *soon*!

Yesterday afternoon I called on the Pauncefotes and in the evening went with Mrs. Bayley to the Indian Exhibition. Had a pleasant time. I must get this off now, so goodbye for the moment.

Yours affectionately,  
Will.

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37 Albermarle St., W.  
London.

21st June, 1895.

Dear Mother:

I send you this to say we will not get through in time to catch the steamer on the 29 inst. Murray, etc., expect to sail on the 6th of July in the "St. Louis," and I may accompany them. The probabilities, however, are in favor of my leaving by the "New York" on the 13th. I will not know, however, until Mr. J. P. Morgan has sized up the financial situation at home and informed me. I found Gurnee here last night and we dined together and he took me to the theatre afterwards. Had a pleasant evening. I send you a steamer plan which shows my room coming over and the concert programme; also a slip to complete my letter to Mary about the Ascot races. I am overwhelmed with correspondence just now on all sides and am very busy. I am going to the country tomorrow to spend Sunday with Mr. Gordon, Mr. Morgan's partner. He lives in Kent near Seven Oaks. Willy Kane appeared this afternoon and I am dining with him tonight and afterwards go to a re-





[1895]

ception at Dr. Hamilton's. I must go and dress now. I have been writing steadily since I came from the city three hours ago and it is now nearly half past seven. Got your letters of June 10th and 11th with clipping last evening. Glad to hear the news.

Love to all.

Yours affectionately,

Will.

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37 Albermarle St., W.

29th June, 1895.

My dear Mother:

I presume that you have my telegram to the office stating that I would not sail until the 13th of July. We have not yet received the authority to deliver the final lot of \$6,000,000, but they are all signed and counted and ready. Carlisle and Massey are in Paris until tomorrow and Murray in Ireland. I have stayed here waiting for a cable.

I dined with Lord Rothschild last night and had a very pleasant time. I met the chap (Broderick) whose motion defeated the Government the other night and his wife Lady Hilda; I should think *she* would have been the one to move it. I met two other members of Parliament, one of the beauties, Mrs. Ady, and her husband, Hon. Chas. Howard, son of Lord Carlisle and others. The house is magnificent and looks out on a beautiful garden. Lady Rothschild was very agreeable and her daughter equally so. I took her (the daughter) out to dinner and sat between her and Mr. Bowles, M. P.

Yesterday afternoon I went to a bazaar and bought several things. Lady Ancaster was there and I did my duty towards various acquaintances, including Miss Gordon and Mrs. Ronalds. The latter sent her love to Annie Buckingham. She looks but little older than before and seems quite as gay and vivacious as ever. My dinner for Roosevelt on Thursday was a great success, though Dr. Hamilton got ill at too late an hour to fill his place. I had Clifford Rich-

... I have been ...  
... I have been ...  
... I have been ...

I had to keep the name

I have to all

Young ...  
1893

1893

and ...

My dear ...

I presume that you have ...  
... I have been ...  
... I have been ...

I have been ...  
... I have been ...  
... I have been ...

I have ...

I have been ...  
... I have been ...  
... I have been ...



[1895]

ardson, Julien Davies and Willy Kane. They came here after the dinner (which was at Willis' Rooms) and all stayed until 12:15. I was asked by Lady Galway for a boating party yesterday, but it rained and I did not go; am asked to the Jersey's for a small garden party this afternoon, but expect to go down to Bedford and spend Sunday with Willy Kane. I wrote Bessie the other day and expect to write to King in answer to his last one. Much obliged for the clippings. Hope Bessie won't break her nose on the new bicycle,—people are crazy over it here. Yours of the 19th has just arrived. You will have a chance for another one. Love to all.

Yours affectionately,  
Will.

37 Albermarle St., W.  
July 9th, 1895.

My dear Mother:

Just a line to acknowledge yours of the 26th. This is my last letter from this side. I am having a very busy week. I lunched with Lady Galway on Sunday and dined with the Eaton's and am going on Lord Cheylesmere's coach to the meet of the Coaching Club Thursday. I have been at the Henley Regatta all day on the Ambassador's Launch and had a perfectly delightful time. Tomorrow, I spend the day at Guilford playing golf with Henry White. The coaching with Lord Ancaster and his party last Saturday was a brilliant success and the garden party at Osterly most entertaining. We had a charming lot of people,—besides Lord and Lady A. were Ladies Margaret and Nina Willoughby, Florence Astley, and Miss Douglas, Tennant and Hon. Astley. The Jerseys were as agreeable as before. Willie Venables is coming here to spend tomorrow night with me. He writes a very good letter. The Curry house, if arranged properly, would be a good thing, I think, though \$3,600 is about as much as it is worth. Could we get it for





[1895]

two years? It is now nearly 1 a. m. and I have to get up early so good night. Love to all.

Yours affectionately,

Will.

### THE CAPITOL \*

The picture of Hon. William E. Curtis, Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, is now going the rounds. With the picture is usually a sketch which represents that Mr. Curtis has just returned from England after performing a very important office there; which was the delivery of the foreign half of the last Government bond issue into the hands of the Rothschilds. The notice usually concludes with an expression of joy that Mr. Curtis was able to do all this so successfully and that he is at last at home and safe again. The handsome Assistant Secretary is one of the most admired of all the bachelors at present at large in Washington society; and with regard to him, as well as to all the other administration bachelors, it is hoped by society generally that they will not let another winter pass without doing what is expected of them by so many.

### TREASURY DEPARTMENT WASHINGTON.

Aug. 29, 1895.

Dear Mother:

Beastly hot! I return this slip. It is August drivel. The Register of the Treasury, Mr. J. Fount Silliman, is the party referred to. The Curry's have decided not to go abroad and their house is not to be rented. The gold withdrawals prevent my leaving here at present.

It is too hot to write any more. Love to all.

Yours affectionately,

Will.

\*Extract from a Washington paper.





[1896]

UNIVERSITY CLUB

Madison Square.

Sept. 18th, 1895.

Dear Mother:

I am still here watching the confounded situation and very tired of it all. The weather is very hot and close and I will be glad to get through. I will probably not get away until we learn the exports by Saturday's steamer, which will not be known until about two on Friday. In that case, I hope to catch the 4 p. m. train or at latest the 1 p. m. on Saturday. Love to all.

Yours affectionately,

Will.

P. S. I saw letter about N. Y. and N. H. stock, cheque, etc. All right.

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UNIVERSITY CLUB

Madison Square.

Sunday.

Dear Mother:

Awfully hot! Dined with Mr. Fairchild and spent the evening. Got your letter this morning. Return at 3:20 tomorrow. Very busy. No rooms here so I went to the Waldorf which is very comfortable and not so horribly expensive. No time to write more. Love to all.

Yours affectionately,

Will.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT  
WASHINGTON.

20th July, 1896.

Dear Mother:

I have your letter of Saturday and am sorry the cool weather gave you neuralgia. Hope it has gone away. I am in a hot, humid atmosphere and it changed in the night so suddenly as to wake me up. I went to sleep with a blanket





[1896]

over me and one window closed and after 4 a. m. had to open the latter and throw off the former. Regarding your letter about New York and New Haven stock, there has been no time when we could sell it to advantage. There were only 284 shares sold in the whole month of June. The immediate financial aspect is squally and the "great chief" is "sulking in his tent" and won't say or do anything. I expect Mr. Carlisle back this evening and I shall try to get him off to Gray Gables at once. *When I think that all this might have been avoided if they had taken my advice in the beginning it "makes me tired."* I will answer your political letter when I have time. I did not write you yesterday at the Inn, as I was busy after luncheon and went to church in the morning. The McKeevers left today. The Rices go tomorrow. The wife of the Portugese Minister heard of her father's death last Thursday and is shut up in her room feeling very badly. They leave at the end of the week. Hamlin went last evening and Mr. Olney with him. I have an idea that the President may return here or have a Cabinet Meeting at Gray Gables. I wanted them to adopt a policy before they all went away. Fortunately I am very well and better prepared for a racket than I was last winter. Love to all.

Yours affectionately,

Will.

P. S. I am hoping to be kept in New York for a week or so and will be able to go to Oriental Hotel at Coney Island or some other place at night.

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TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
WASHINGTON.

3 Aug. 1896.

Dear Mother:

I expected to have written yesterday but there was nothing to say. It was pretty warm and we had the usual five o'clock shower, which cooled the air and gave us a good





[1896]

night but tomorrow will be especially warm, so the papers say. I have asked the finance officials of the Japanese Government, now here, to dine at the Inn tonight with me and have two or three to meet them. I dined in town Saturday having paid a visit of condolence to the Portuguese people and have done some errands. Dr. Wyman brought Mrs. Thomas and Miss Goddard in for the theatre and I met them there. The play, "School," was very well done. Had a light supper and got back to the Inn about 12 and just as a terrific shower of rain and a gale of wind began. Miss Storey's engagement to that little Belgian de Buisseret is announced. How could she? I wired you at 118 Madison Avenue today. All well. Love to all.

Yours affectionately,  
Will.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
WASHINGTON.

28th Oct. 1896.

Dear Mother:

Last night Mrs. Thomas had a jackstraw party in her rooms at the Grafton and Miss Riddle, Miss Goddard, Dr. Wyman, Prof. Procter and I had a very jolly evening. We did not break up until after 12 and had oysters in a chafing dish and beer. This morning I had a long interview with the President on the financial situation, which was very interesting. He seems remarkably well and belligerent, and confident that there are a majority of thoughtful people in the country who will vote for sound money.

Yours affectionately,  
Will.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT  
WASHINGTON.

30th Oct. 1896.

Dear Mother:

Had another long conversation with the President yes-





[1902]

terday. Mr. Carlisle will be here Sunday. I do not think I will go to New York before Monday afternoon and possibly not until after the election. We had some excitement yesterday but it has quieted down again this morning and I hope it is laid for some time. The getting house affairs settled don't bother me because Camfield attends to all the detail.

I had a beautiful box of double violets from Watertown and sent half to Mrs. Thomas and half to Miss Henriques and received corresponding effusions. It is growing cooler again this morning after three days of summer weather. Romecke is sending the slips here and there are a great many. The press agents say that no letter in this canvass had been so widely printed or commented upon as mine. I am very much pleased, as it's reception was so completely unexpected by me. Love to all.

Yours affectionately,

Will.

That was the last of my brother's letters from Washington and the next is in 1902 describing his L.L.D. at a Trinity College Commencement (just fifty years since my fathers graduation.)

14 West 20th St.,  
June 26/02.

My dear Mother:

I have just had my dinner and scratch this to say that everything went off very well yesterday and that we had perfect weather. The Beaches all came in from West Hartford to see me hooded and all the Chapman tribe came for the same purpose. We had the most successful Commencement in years. The hall was crowded and there was the greatest enthusiasm. There were 60 who could not get seats at the Alumni dinner. I got lots of congratulations and was very much pleased at what various people said and who said it. Mrs. Edward Perkins asked for you and so did





[1902]

Mr. Smith and the Beaches, etc. I think I may not get off to York Harbor tomorrow and may arrange to stay until Monday. I will wire you as soon as I can see daylight. I got your letter here and also Bessies'. Love to all.

Yours affectionately,

Will.

CURTIS, MALLET — PREVOST & COLT,

30 Broad St.,

New York.

Sept. 15/02.

My dear Mother:

Mayor Low has asked me to take the position of Aqueduct Commissioner vacated by the death of Judge Powers last week and I have accepted it. The Merchants Assoc. were very anxious I should. It is a Board Membership of which the Mayor and Comptroller are also members *ex officio*. It requires one meeting a week in the afternoon. The salary is \$5,000. per year indefinitely and does not interfere with my practice. It is a very complimentary appointment and means a lot in politics. I gave up going to Congress when I found how the matters were here last Spring and this is all right. There may be a fight to prove I am *not* a democrat but I am enrolled as one in my own district. They can't very well get around that. I am just going up to the Mayor's office. Bessie will now see me in the papers again and I hope she will be pleased!! The carpenters went back. Sarre and Wight just called me on the telephone so I shall see Savin tomorrow and bargain for immediate possession. Love to all.

Yours affectionately,

Will.

This was the last political appointment Will ever accepted — He was completely absorbed in his profession his interest in the Scovill Manufacturing Company, St. Georges Church, St. Luke's Hospital, Trinity College, and





for recreation, Golf — When he left the Treasury he returned to the endless drudgery of a law office in New York, now Curtis, Mallet, Prevost & Colt. His inherited conscientiousness made him take life hard and seriously. He felt hurt that nobody knew what he had done, but at the same time it was a matter of principle, and also abhorrent to his modest nature, to put himself forward. One can see from what my grandfather wrote to Papa that even *before* 1800, sensitiveness and that sort of shyness, were Curtis characteristics. To continue hereditary qualities Will resembled his father\* and with Holbrook, Randolph and Mary had finely cut features and beautiful hands, but all the family except Sanford were medium height like my mother and her mother, instead of tall like my father, his parents and her own father. Holbrook and Randolph were blond like Papa while all the others were dark. So much for Mendelism and the white mice!

William died in August 1923, after several years of bad health. It has been a hideous task trying to sort out the boxes, drawers, desks, closets and trunks of old papers. No matter how many letters I read, more remain, and those from my father are much more interesting than the journal which he kept as a book of reference for his own private delectation. However, I found so much that proved quaintly amusing that instead of making extracts, I included nearly all in this voluminous "juggernaut."

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\*In mind and taste more than any of the others but looked like my mother.





Holbrook, the second boy, was always remarkable for his force of character, quick wit and talent for music and painting. When he was twelve years old he spent a winter in Nassau with Dr. Kirkwood and established his taste for medicine, attending every autopsy that he could. He also learned to sail a boat himself and showed the sense of a grown man. They told a story of his going into a lunatic's room at the hotel and by tact and strategy getting a pistol away from him when nobody else had the courage. Before he got into the treadmill of New York; where overwork, a sensitive temperament and the constant handicap of a delicate constitution, harrassed and fretted him, he was the center of merriment in every gathering. At home, at school, in Cheshire, at Yale College, he amused friends and family. My mother never tired of recounting his sayings and escapades. In 1884 he married a beautiful girl, Josephine Allen, of Brooklyn, and his two sons were given the family names of William Edmond, and Henry Holbrook. Only his daughter Marjorie\* is living now, and she is married to Thomas L. Chadbourne and has two little girls. After graduating from the Medical School, Holbrook studied in Vienna and Paris and worked at one time with "his beloved preceptor, Dr. T. Gaillard Thomas." His intention of making diseases of women his specialty was never followed because, for one thing, he became interested in throats at the time of my brother Sanford's death; and later he discovered that by making a patient sing while looking down his throat, he could see nodules and diseased conditions of the chords which were easily remedied. This brought him such a furor of success added to what he accomplished in nasal and head surgery that his office was besieged by singers and even the crowned heads of Europe sent for him at various times. Dr. Lenox Brown president of the British Laryngological, Rhinological Society said in

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\*She inherited her grandmother's voice, but gave up music for sculpture in which she was doing well at the time of her marriage.





*Dr. Holbrook Curtis*











a speech before that body in 1891 that "the naissance of nasal surgery in London followed the performance by *Dr. Curtis* of sixteen brilliant operations on the nose, at the London Central Throat Hospital in 1887."

The passion for singing which he inherited from his mother made him take great pleasure in the friendship of his Operatic patients, but this sort of practice rather obscured his surgical work.

In a short memoir he writes, "I look back upon the day when Mr. Strakosch, the librarian of the Metropolitan Opera House, brought to my office Jean and Edouard de Reszke, for it was from that moment my interest in the singing voice became vital, and the great musical intelligence of these two men inspired me with a love of the art which has possessed me ever since. To Jean de Reszke we owe the great strides made in the time of Abbey, Schoeffel, and Grau, at the opera, in contradistinction to the stilted style of the old Academy of Music ten years earlier, when each aria in turn was sung by the artist, after a walk down the stage, and delivered as a solo, the opera being temporarily interrupted, with also a suitable pause for flowers. Jean de Reszke introduced the coalescence of the song sentiment and the true dramatic element in opera. He was an excellent actor and never for a moment left the picture to appeal to the audience. He sang in the true French method, as did Edouard, his brother; Plancon was a true exponent of this type of singing, *dans le masque*, so called. Plancon and Jean both observed the high chest and used interior costal respiration. I went with the brothers to their home at Borowna in Poland, spending two weeks on the de Reszke estate, and had many chances to get ideas of tone production which became invaluable to me later. Jean was then learning *Tristan* and was making a poem out of German 'schrecklichkeit.' Jean sang with his soul, and every phrase carried conviction and showed a superior musical conception. His voice itself was not a perfect one,





for he lacked the tenor timbre so essential to the happiness of an Italian gallery, but he showed the true poetry of musical phrasing and thrilled his audiences in a way that I have never seen equalled except by Caruso. If any of you happened to see the great matinee performance of *Tristan und Isolde* by Jean and Lili Lehmann in 1898, you will, I think, agree with me that the perfection of action and song was attained. Jean de Reszke was an upholder of perfect relaxation in singing and always advocated singing 'F' on the staff with a covered tone and sometimes his 'E'. He frequently told me that a baritone should never sing an open 'D'. Like many singers he changed his ideas in teaching, and of late years he has advocated a voluntary raising of the soft palate in the higher register of the soprano voice, while I have always maintained that the soft palate has a special adjustment for every note sung. Its real function is that of a stop, attuning the cavities of the mouth and nose by becoming a portiere which, drawn over the pharynx, apportions the sound waves to those cavities best calculated to reinforce the fundamental tone and make rich the voice in overtones.

"Madame Sembrich is a Pole, and at that time was having a great success in concerts. I must claim the distinction of securing her a second engagement at the Metropolitan, for when Grau was short a 'Rosina' one night, and asked me if I knew of one, I so cordially recommended Mme. Sembrich that he said he would engage her, although he thought my enthusiasm was unwarranted. At the end of the music teacher's scene, when she had removed her gloves and responded to seven encores, playing her own accompaniments, Grau came to me and said: 'She has made a great success,' and after the performance he engaged her for the remainder of the season. Grau had probably forgotten the success she had made in 1883, when she sang with Christine Nilsson and entranced the public. She played both the violin and the piano to perfection. On her





*Holbrook Curtis 3rd*











return to New York, after the San Francisco earthquake, Marcella Sembrich gave a concert which netted over ten thousand dollars, which she divided between the orchestra, to duplicate their lost instruments, and the members of the chorus. This act, together with her charities and personal work for suffering humanity secured her the medal of the National Institute of Social Sciences in 1916."

"In 1896, Appleton published the first edition of my book, 'Voice Building and Tone Placing', which I dedicated to Jean de Reszke. In the Scientific American of May 29th, 1897, I made public the fact that, what the consensus of opinion had decided upon as the best tone, viz: the tone with the fullest complement of overtones and consequently most agreeable to the ear, made a perfect geometric figure when sung in an instrument which I described and called the Tonograph. This apparatus was made by stretching a rubber membrane, the so-called rubber dam of the dentist, over a metal bowl with a hole in the bottom, into which tones could be sung through a flexible tube. The tones produced in the various notes of the scale made beautiful geometric figures in a mixture of emery and salt sprinkled on the rubber disc of this simple contrivance. This article was reproduced all over Europe and called forth much comment in the scientific papers. It was the application to the human voice of Chladni's experiment with sand on vibrating plates. The same note always made the same figure, but different voices producing the same note caused a marked difference in the thickness of certain lines of the emery mixture in the figure on the diaphragm, in accordance with the relative strength or weakness of the overtones of the fundamental note. I have brought some photographs of these beautiful geometric figures, sung by celebrated artists, which show these differences. By a study of these pictures and analyzing the overtones by Koenig's flames, one could make a mathematical equation of the human voice. The result of several years' study of the subject lead me to conclude that the 'Ma, Ma,' arpeggio,







which is known very generally as the 'Curtis Maw, Maw Exercise,' was as near as could be described a proper placement of tone; at any rate, it has been accepted by such authorities as Jean and Edouard de Reszke, Sembrich, Melba, Scotti, Calve, Caruso, Witherspoon, Hinkel, Anna Case, and many others." \*

All of my mother's children, except William and Mary, had talent for painting. Some of the things Holbrook did, never having had a lesson in his life, are truly remarkable, particularly the marines, for he always loved the sea.

The family seemed to be at their height of success in 1895 and 1896. William had saved the country from bankruptcy by his clear vision and knowledge of law. Holbrook with an international reputation, was having extraordinary Sunday evening musicales when the great, unequalled and charming Jean de Reske sang for friendship's sake.

My mother instead of going South for the winter took a house in Washington to be near my brother Will where she and my sister enjoyed to the utmost the variegated society which they entertained.

Sanford (who died when only twenty) and Randolph, were both humorous, artistic and beloved by everyone who knew them. Although "Ran" as he was called, studied law, he hated New York and the routine of an office, so that my mother gave him his share of my father's property which enabled him to buy a place twelve miles from Asheville on the French Broad, named "Zilla Coa." At first he tried to raise tobacco, but finding it an uncertain crop, he turned the land to clover. The stone bungalow which he built on top of a mountain was reached by a road that wound up through ploughed fields of red clay soil, into woods that were filled in spring with lacy dogwood, flaming azalia, and rhododendron that bloomed as though in a garden. From this setting the view extended for fifty miles to Pisgah Mountain; purple and blue, with fleeting cloud shadows and glimpses of the winding river. Log

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\*Holbrook died in May, 1920 shortly after he wrote this article.

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Lives," and is said to be the first of the  
series of lives of the same name. It is  
found in the "Lives of the same name."  
The "Lives of the same name" are  
and many others.

All in my mind, I have seen the  
last of the same name. It is the same  
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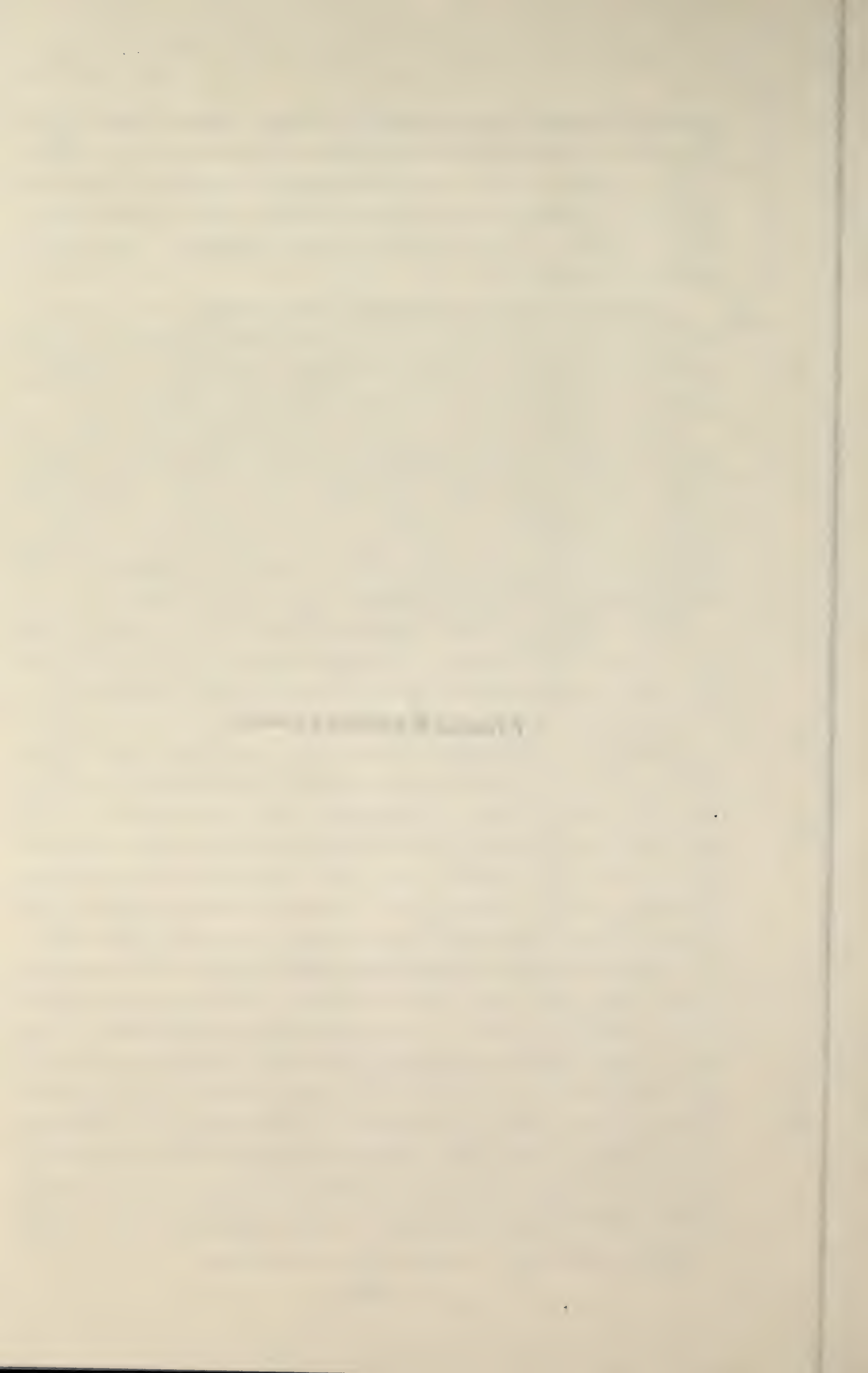
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*Francis Randolph Curtis*











cabins and a patchwork quilt of farming country lay in the middle distance giving substance and solidity to what seemed too beautiful for reality. Here my brother led an ideal existence; riding over the farm, shooting with friends from the North, and making expeditions to Asheville in the dog cart with sagacious "Old Black Joe" as leader. Randolph had red hair, rounded, aquiline features, a well-proportioned figure and a delightful speaking voice. Nothing of beauty, in art, literature, or music, was lost to him; and his nature was remarkably sweet, affectionate and at the same time upright, loyal and courageous. Several years before his death he became involved in a land improvement venture in Cumberland Gap which proved a failure and the consequent depression laid him open to pneumonia, of which he suffered two attacks that led to his final illness.

(Here is his last letter.)

## ADIRONDACK MOUNTAINS

June 2nd, 1892

My dearest Bess;

I was sorry not to have you up, but I found that Ross had arranged to go into camp, near here, where it is very fine fishing. Then to move to St. Regis and on to permanent camp.

As my object here is to get under canvas as soon as possible, I gave up the idea of having you with me for the present. It would be impossible for you to camp alone with any comfort, if you will only think about it. Later I have no doubt we can arrange for a jolly long visit.

— arrived to-day and we start for Moose Pond in the morning. From there we will knock around. He is off fishing now, and we have not really decided on our plans.

Tell Mamma that I have received all the letters. There have been shoals of them, and it has been very jolly to be kept so well posted on family interests. Love to all

Your disappointed

Ran.





[1902]

He was mayor of Harrogate, Tenn., while he lived there, although he never gave up "Zilla Coa." Feeling strongly that the feuds among the mountaineers must be put down at all costs, he incurred the enmity of a gang who swore they would kill him within a week. One night he was sitting with a friend, Jim Churchill, in his room when they heard some one say "now we'll get him," and the tramp of men ascending the stairs. Both Ran and Mr. Churchill had no fire arms (the reason why I forget). The latter was extremely tall and by a lucky inspiration he lifted the door off its hinges and like a sledge hammer hit the first man straight down the stairs. There was a scuffle, help came from the street and their lives were saved.

My brother always had a little gray donkey named Sally for me to ride and when a child I planned to keep house at "Zilla Coa" and live in the Carolina mountains with soft-voiced darkies to cook delectible corn-bread. Nobody can stay long in the South without loving it, that is the real South, and not a dreadful vulgar, winter resort. My mother began going to Charleston before the war and among my earliest recollections are the flower-bordered paths of the magnolia gardens, and the darkies singing while they rowed or worked along the shore. She was adored by her five boys in a way I have never seen elsewhere. They had a protective feeling for her and yet obeyed her, even when grown up. She seemed to understand their business problems as well as music or painting. Mr. Carlisle when Secretary of the Treasury, said he would rather ask her advice than that of any man he knew. My brother William while in Washington talked over everything with her, but wrote in his letters very little, except what he felt was discreet to put upon paper — details of life which gave no clue to his responsibility or anxiety over the Gold Reserve, which she said, turned him into an old man.

As this is the winding up of "four generations" I must add that to me the most appealing, the most human and





*Mary Alathea Curtis*

## Abstract









[1902]

spontaneous of all the letters I have been obliged to look over, are those to my mother from her little boys at St. Paul's Cheshire, Trinity and Yale College, and her own letters back again. They have not, however, as yet the antique flavor that would seem to warrant their inclusion here, neither do they bear upon anything of great importance. The qualities of character and mind I value most come from my mother, but as my name and family pride come from my father, I feel that to him I owe the gathering up and tying together of these records which cover one hundred and thirty years. Here each one speaks again through what he has written.

reputation of all the world I have been obliged to look  
 very far from me for another from the little town of  
 Long's Landing, Texas and Y. S. College and for our  
 large bank again. For this and because we for the  
 winter have been in various parts of the  
 State, neither do they bear any relation to their  
 name. The quality of wheat and corn I will not  
 come from my name, but as my name and family name  
 stand for my father's (see name in 1850) and for  
 me and my mother of those names were we  
 married and they were. Their name our name was  
 through out the name.



APPENDIX

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(Delivered at the close of the Revolution — taken from the Newtown paper, Centennial of 1885.)

*Judge Edmond's Fourth of July Oration.*

Gentlemen, friends and fellow citizens: On a day dedicated to solemnize and perpetuate the memory of an event long wished for, purchased with much blood, with much treasure, with many a woe, and great and glorious, surrounded as I am with so numerous and respectable an audience, when every eye is fixed upon me, upon a subject of so much importance, and unaccustomed to this kind of speaking, I must hope for your favorable consideration. At a period when the new born Empire of America, to her recent independence has added the friendship and alliance of neighboring nations, when the Almighty Governor of universal Nature has crowned our glorious struggles with freedom, independence and an honorable peace, let me bespeak your patience for a few moments, while I dwell on the worth of the object for which we have contended, the means by which, under heaven, it has been secured and the use and improvement we ought to make of the conquest.

I shall not take up your time with a geographical description of America the vast extent of territory, the fertility of the soil, its many navigable rivers, bays and harbors, the advantages of her commerce, the benefits of her fisheries, the rapid increase of population and wealth, which, so peculiarly situated as this country is, cannot fail to take place. These are circumstances too notorious to everyone to need any explanation. Nor shall I enter into the question what occasioned, what was the true cause, or who were aggressors in the late War? But only observe that Heaven and the sword have decided in favor of America.

The contest was for liberty, and in liberty, properly understood, consists the beauty of Government, the happiness of individuals, and the glory and boast of man. The want of





adequate or just notions of Liberty has been the occasion of innumerable difficulties and disorders since the commencement of the war. For while some supposed that Liberty consisted in an unlimited, uncontrolled power of conduct according to the dictates of their capricious fancy without respect to the right of others, they naturally run into unjustifiable extravagances and licentiousness. But such a liberty ever was & ever will be opposed and detested by every generous mind. Some kind of law, government or order is absolutely necessary in every society to guard the weak and defenceless from the attacks of the strong, the savage and cruel, and ever will be so while human nature continues the same. All government is an actual infringement on the natural liberty of man; that government, therefore, is the most eligible which provides in the most effectual manner for the interest and happiness of every individual member of society, at the least expense of natural liberty. This, then, may be a just definition,—that true liberty consists in the natural liberty of man so far restrained and no farther, as is absolutely necessary for the benefit of society. Every further encroachment, however specious, in appearance or splendid the garb in which it is imposed, is the essence of tyranny. This liberty thus qualified and restrained (and not a total exemption from all law, order, and good government as some have weakly imagined) is the grand object for which we have been contending. For which our bravest heroes, brethren, friends, and children, have drawn their swords, have fought, have bled, have bled, have died. To secure such a liberty, such a freedom and such an independence to ourselves, to posterity and to millions yet unborn the virtuous sons of America rous'd to arms. To procure such a glorious freedom (and not to gratify a little selfish passion) they bid defiance to hunger, cold, and nakedness, prisons, goals, and torture and every other woe incident to war.

To enumerate the various coincidences which have contributed to render their endeavors successful; to mention







[1785]

the number of well-fought, blood stained battles where grisly death stalked hideous; to mention the generous assistance of our great and good allies, the unparalleled bravery of our soldiery or even to renumerate the names of those heroes who have contributed to this great event would far exceed the bounds I have prescribed to myself. But faithful history shall record these things and distant nations render the just tribute of praise.

Permit me however in a cursory glance to remind you of the Battle of Lexington the 19th of April, 1775, and there let us trace the first footsteps of a rugged path. From thence let us pass to Bunker Hill on the 17th of the following June and see how many fall. From there on in January 1777 let us pass to Princeton, from there to Saratoga September the 7th, from there let us return to Germantown, on the 4th of October, and here let it ever be remembered that the brave sons of America, impatient and weary of a defensive war, made the first regular and offensive attack upon their cruel invaders.

From there let us haste to Stillwater, Red Bank, Monmouth, Rhode Island, the cow pens and Guilford court house. At each of these places let us pause a moment, view the carnage, behold the struggles and be astonished at the bravery of our troops! All these are scenes of blood. Alas, the fate of war! Death takes his thousands and ten thousand mothers weep. Father of all, is this the lot of man to be his brother's butcher? But I haste from so disagreeable a subject. The calamities of war, however, when properly considered may serve to enhance the value of Peace and incline our hearts on this joyful occasion to gratitude to that supreme being who is justly styled the God of Peace.

The capture of General Burgoyne and his army on the 17th of Oct. 1777 followed soon after by that of Lord Cornwallis are events that will be read with astonishment by future ages in the chronicles of the American War, and it will justly be considered as a signal instance of the inter-

The number of well-bred, educated, and  
 highly cultivated persons in London is  
 estimated at 200,000 and good order  
 and of our subjects is in no manner  
 inferior to the best countries in the  
 world. The number of persons who are  
 well-bred, educated, and good order  
 is estimated at 200,000 and good order  
 is in no manner inferior to the best  
 countries in the world.

I found the number of persons who are  
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position of Divine Providence in inspiring the hearts of a rude and undisciplined army with a courage and magnanimity unexampled in the records of time.

We have a further manifestation of Divine aid, in that the Regent of Heaven has been pleased to raise up an unexceptionable leader, adorned with every virtue and every accomplishment necessary for a man who was to undertake and complete the most virtuous task ever allotted a human being, to take a rude and undisciplined army unskilled in the art of war, unarmed, unclothed, unfed, unpaid, and scanty in numbers, and with that army encounter and conquer an army of veteran troops, superior in numbers, possessed of every advantage, and lead his little army through every toil, every difficulty and every danger to the summit of glory and victory and therewith establish a New Empire and then again unrelaxed with prosperity, to retire to the calm and contemplative scenes of private life is what none but a Washington did ever perform. In this he stands alone unrivalled and unparalleled.

And here while I am enumerating some few of the signal Providences of the Almighty, I might take notice of the detection of a conspiracy plotted by the most accomplished of villains, but I forbear to mention a name which must carry with it the idea of horror so long as there are men to distinguish beauty from deformity and to discern the difference between virtue and vice. But I leave the hated, hated picture, and the detested man, to the friends of the daring but unfortunate Major André to deprecate his proper vengeance, only adding a sentence from the first writer in the world as applied to him in a late publication in the Connecticut Courant: "Do not repent thee of these things, for they are heavier than all thy woe can stir; therefore betake thee to nothing but despair. A thousand knees, ten thousand years together naked, fasting, on a barren mountain and still Winter in storm perpetual could not move the Gods to look that way thou wert."





[1785]

Our other officers of far, far different character and those brave soldiers who have so nobly exerted themselves to bring about this great, this glorious and important event, highly merit our warmest approbation and applause, to deny it would be ingratitude. Nor ought we ever to forget the hardy race of heroes who in Winter's freezing, shivering blasts, in their tents, with woe-worn countenances have laid their wearied limbs with not a feather or covers did I say, not even a straw to ease their bruised limbs, upon the frost, and all this to purchase the liberty, the freedom, the Peace, the glorious Peace we this day enjoy, Nay, many, very many have sacrificed their lives to obtain the invaluable purchase. To the memory of these, my friends, 'tis generous to drop a voluntary tear. Great was their love, their sufferings great! but I refrain. I pass them by. I would not cause their wounds to bleed afresh. The doleful tale must wound the ear of many a parent, must pierce the heart of many a matron, of many a tender virgin unsluice the eye of woe and make humanity recoil.

But dry your sorrows up my friends and let us see what peace accords. Peace abroad leaves room for happiness at home. But how is peace to be restored? The answer's easy. Throw off all party spirit, forget old quarrels, bury little resentments, act like men, like rational creatures, like candidates for an hereafter. But, say some, we cannot forget, we can't, we won't forgive; for why? Because they have been our inveterate enemies, have rejoiced at our misfortunes and have sought our lives. What then? the greater the injury has been, the greater is the glory to forgive. If a man has strength and courage superior to his enemy he can conquer him; a brute can do the same with the same advantages. 'Tis a disposition to forgive (not revenge) an injury that shows a greatness of mind and distinguishes a man from a brute, and every man is truly great in proportion as he finds himself able and willing to subdue his passions, to curb his resentments and govern himself by







the Laws of Reason. Let us then, my friends, seriously consider these things. Let us learn to subdue our passions, to govern our resentments, to bear provocation like Christians, like reasonable and accountable creatures, and let us take pattern by our great Example who, "When he was reviled, reviled not again," and when tortured by his enemies said "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." Such a temper and such a disposition would promote harmony and peace among the inhabitants of this town, would add strength to the Legislature, restore a proper tone to government, establish regularity and order, do honor to religion, make us happier in this world and be no bar in our progress to another.

Animated with such noble views inspired with such laudable motives, what might we not hope, what might we not expect, what even might we not shun and what blessings might we not hope to obtain.

Let each of us then endeavor as soon as possible to surrender up our contracted views and notions and learn to form our ideas on a more liberal and extended scale. Let us not consider ourselves merely as members of a farm, a town or a city, but as members of a rising Empire, as citizens of the world and as members of the family of Him of whom all the families of the earth are called. Finally, gentlemen, friends, and fellow citizens, let us ever keep in mind that great and glorious benediction, pronounced in the Gospel of our Lord and Savior, "Blessed are the Peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God," and let us not only on this day of public joy and rejoicing but through all the remaining days and years of our lives endeavor so to conduct ourselves that when the closing scenes of all sublunary enjoyments are at an end, when joy and festivity in this world are no more and Death, the King of Terrors, stares us in the face, we may be able, like valiant and victorious soldiers to joy in the Lord and rejoice in the God of our salvation.





(Extract of letter about the Edmond family from one of the descendants to my father.)

(Mr. Tweedy says there is not a particle of Irish Blood in the Edmonds. Robert Edmond's father and mother moved from Scotland into Ireland, where Robert was born. He hated the Irish, said they were, where he lived among them, like pigs, of the lowest grade. Mr. Tweedy said he had heard G. G. Robert Edmond relate this anecdote of himself: He was in Litchfield and a man called him an Irishman. He denied it and offered and did bet all the wine the company could drink that he was not, the bet was accepted. The man said he was born and lived in Ireland, consequently an Irishman. He admitted this but said his parents were Scots and moved there, and used this illustration: "Suppose some sheep (Scots) were to be removed to another country and put in a pen with pigs (Irish) and a lamb should be born there to them, would that lamb be a pig?" The company decided that he was not an Irishman. I am sorry to destroy your prejudice in favor of the Irish to whom I have no partiality. I think the Scots superior to the Irish, although Dr. Johnson did not like them and they are said to be subject to a cutaneous disease that requires a good deal of scratching.)

OFFICE OF ASSISTANT TREASURER U. S.

NEW YORK CITY, Jan. 28th, 1895

My dear Mr. Curtis:

I send you three bills, which if read aright, will tell the course of our market. The importers are selling all bills payable in gold — thus all loss resulting from the cessation of gold payments will fall upon our people. The feeling here is that the President will not get the desired relief, and that if he adheres to his idea as to the non-issue of existing (5s) bonds the end is at hand. Today began a run

(Extract of letter from the Hon. Secy. of the Interior to the Hon. Secy. of the Navy, dated July 1, 1877.)

The Hon. Secy. of the Interior has the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 27th inst., and in reply to inform you that the same has been forwarded to the proper authorities for their consideration. The Hon. Secy. of the Navy has also been informed of the same, and it is hoped that the necessary arrangements will be made for the relief of the distressed people of the Territory.

The Hon. Secy. of the Interior has also the honor to inform you that the same has been forwarded to the proper authorities for their consideration. The Hon. Secy. of the Navy has also been informed of the same, and it is hoped that the necessary arrangements will be made for the relief of the distressed people of the Territory.

Very respectfully,  
Hon. Secy. of the Interior

The Hon. Secy. of the Navy has the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 27th inst., and in reply to inform you that the same has been forwarded to the proper authorities for their consideration. The Hon. Secy. of the Interior has also been informed of the same, and it is hoped that the necessary arrangements will be made for the relief of the distressed people of the Territory.



[1895]

in small amounts — \$72,728 in small lots — \$5,000 or under, gold bonds 62,539 in addition; the banks are beginning a general run — I mean those who have heretofore abstained — we must have more gold from nearby points. San Francisco is too risky. Our coin gold is reduced to \$13,639,000 — which we shall lose this week. One caution I desire to give as to a new loan. No interval must elapse before bids. If our gold is taken beforehand, & that it is certain to be — if the loan is offered for gold, we shall be bankrupt before we get any returns from the loan, & as before, we wont get it back if the offers are rejected. Another caution, if we are to wait (before another loan is put out) for legislation & it is held up for any cause — we are gone “hook, bob & sinker.” The withdrawals, now the “run” is on, will be “short, sharp & decisive.” I enclose list for today to point out its character and to say that on searching the bank returns today I find that the banks are losing gold in small amounts as well. “Forewarned is forearmed.” From your “Cassandra.” (I add <sup>2</sup>) I would stop the gold bar privilege at 4 cents per hundred & charge an  $\frac{1}{8}$  — that is a game that has developed within the last week. Women, as well as men, are now on the “gold path.” Try the temporary certificate — if you are going before Congress that they can be told leaves the matter in their control. This thing may degenerate or rise into a panic as you prefer.

Yrs.C.N.J.

\*\$21,000 (odd.) of so-called jewelers have come in at five minutes of three — after this letter had closed — How tired you must be of

C.N.J.





















